# Disciplining Post-Communist Remembrance:

# from Politics of Memory to the Emergence of a Mnemonic Field

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**ABSTRACT**

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I examine the origins of the anti-totalitarian collective memory pervading Central and Eastern Europe by tracking the genesis and development of the region's ubiquitous and state-sponsored memory institutes. I deploy field analysis, prosopography and in-depth interviews to reveal how these hybrid institutes generate a potent anti-communist symbolic repertoire by overseeing alliances and exchanges across political, historiographic and Eurocratic fields. Memory institutes ensure this hegemony fundamentally via two mechanisms: The scientific validation of their activities by way of scholarly co-optation, and its regional legitimation through incursions into European arenas. I conclude that memory institutes are ultimately a key element of post-communist political competition, responsible for creating a durable symbolic advantage for the right's conservative identity politics.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## LIST OF FIGURES

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When over four years ago I transferred from a Political Science department to Columbia Sociology, I was unaware of the depth of the abyss between the two disciplines. Transitioning was therefore unexpectedly arduous, but undoubtedly the right choice. Three years ago, speaking to my supervisor, I remember conveying to him that, for a text, lecture or debate to spark my sociological imagination, I still needed a bridge to the political world, to the realm of power in its crudest expression. This is no longer the case, and the first thing to acknowledge is my regret that this realization did not come sooner. I take this as a sign that I have not yet reached full scholarly maturity, but I find this realization comforting, a refreshing reminder that I retain some of the flexibility and eagerness to learn of my youthful university years in Lisbon.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EU – European Union

EEC – European Economic Community

EP – European Parliament

EC – European Commission

MEP – Member of European Parliament

Platform – Platform of European Memory and Conscience

BStU – Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Archives (Germany)

IPN – Institute of National Remembrance (Poland)

# INTRODUCTION

As post-communist countries began joining the European Union (EU) in 2004, Western observers converged on the view that despite minor flaws in the implementation of administrative, judicial and economic reforms, the transitions sparked by the fall of the Berlin Wall had largely been a success story. Post-communist politics were turning predictably boring, as socialist, liberal and conservative parties took turns in power in what many welcomed as a sign of their "return to Europe" (Kundera 1984). However, below this unobtrusive surface a simmering resentment brewed among a significant group of the political elite in liberal, and more typically conservative camps, a group that believed the revolutions of 1989 were not worthy of the name and that communists had skillfully maneuvered their way back to power (Mark 2010:1-3, 14; Bozoki 2008).

The most notorious museum of communism of the region, the Terror House in Budapest, Hungary, is a material embodiment of this lingering bitterness. A historical museum dedicated to Hungary's parallel totalitarian experiences with Nazism and Communism, it belongs to a Foundation that, thanks to generous state funding, promotes scholarly research on contemporary history. Its location conveys continuity between the two totalitarianisms: Between 1937 and 1944 the building hosted a branch of the Hungarian national socialist movements, whereas between 1946 and 1956 the Communist political police occupied the building, located on one of Budapest's central boulevards. The most remarkable exhibition space, recreated with chilling cinematographic intent, are its cellars, were both Nazis and communists tortured political prisoners. Ultimately, the Museum tells "the story of undifferentiated terror from the moment of the German occupation until (…) the Soviet army left the territory of Hungary" (Rév 2005:313). However, for its many critics,

an even greater problem was in the longer, implicit story it told: The museum dedicates all but two of its two dozen rooms to communism, with everything in them "intended to keep alive the hatred of former Communist leaders and their sons and daughters." (Turai 2009:102). More significantly, the museum was inaugurated six weeks ahead of the 2002 general election by conservative Prime-Minister Viktor Orbán himself, as his governing party Fidesz prepared to face the successors of the communist party in a tight electoral contest.

Orbán would lose. And would lose again in 2006. Yet, by September of that year, the resentfulness conveyed by the Terror House was well beyond its simmering stage. The recently re-elected socialist Prime-Minister Ferenc Gyurcsányi faced immense pressure to resign following the leak of a private party speech in which he admitted winning the re-election by lying about the country's crumbling finances: "we lied morning, noon and night. … We have screwed up. Not a little but a lot" (BBC 2006). The speech was a private and passionate condemnation of fellow party members' inability to enact reforms in a deteriorating economy, and a justification for recent austerity reforms that had taken Hungarians by surprise. With the leak, Hungary compounded its financial troubles with its greatest political crisis of post-communism and the worst violence witnessed since the 1956 revolution against Soviet rule[1]. For an entire month, protesters and opposition parties demanded the Prime-Minister's resignation, and the symbolic advantage of a momentous political battle was all on Orbán's side. The opposition successfully recreated some of the key moments of the 1956 rebellion against the Soviets, aware of the proximity to October 23rd, the loaded 50th anniversary of the invasion. Hundreds of angry rioters broke into the Hungarian Television headquarters demanding the broadcast of a nationalist manifesto – much in the same way 56-ers

[1] On October 23rd, 1956 Hungary saw a popular revolt against communist rule that lasted until November 10, when Soviet troops neutralized the rebellion.

had occupied the Hungarian Radio headquarters to demand autonomy from Soviet rule. If half a century before rebels toppled a statue of Stalin, this time around protesters directed their anger at a monument to the liberation of Hungary by the Red Army in 1945, covering it with paint and writings of "filthy commies" (Zombory 2008:17). Protesters also consistently drew on a classic repertoire of anti-communist slogans, such as "system change", "56", and "communist murderers". Finally, in the most poignant analogy, by concealing the size of the budget deficit to voters ahead of the 2006 vote, Gyurcsány had tampered with the election and lied just as the communists had routinely done in the past.

October 23rd finally came, and a resilient but for many illegitimate Gyurcsány lead the 50th anniversary commemoration of the landmark day in the country's struggle against communism. His position could not have been more vulnerable: a former President of the Organization of Young Communists, Gyurcsány successfully pursued a career in the private sector during the 1990s, and by 2002 was among the fifty richest people in Hungary (Origo 2002), confirming a widely held view that the regime change had compensated, rather than punished communists. Opposition supporters chose to attend Orbán's counter-ceremony, who underscored the continuity between past and current events: "the bankruptcy of socialism has not been clarified; accountability for those responsible was lost. This and only this made it possible for the lie to return (…) to dominate our lives again" (Gépnarancs 2016). As protests continued, many of Budapest's wide boulevards witnessed unseen levels of police and street violence, with rubber bullets fired and rocks hurled. Encouraged by a jubilant crowd, one protester started up a T-34 tank from 1956 that was part of a street exhibit, driving it through one of Budapest's main traffic arteries. At the end of the day 195 protesters and police officers had suffered injuries, and opposition analogies to the repression of Soviet troops mounted. Gyurcsány would survive until 2009, but the perfect symbolic storm that

coalesced around the anniversary of 1956 sealed the fate of the Hungarian socialists, who would gradually sink never to re-emerge as a credible contender for power. In 2010, Orbán won his "revolution in the ballot-box" with an unprecedented two thirds majority, which he retains to this day, on the promise to rid the country of the remaining traces of its communist past.

The potency of an anti-communist symbolic repertoire was suddenly visible to Hungarians, but the events of 2006 told a larger story of memory's comeback to post-communist politics, one motivated by frustration. As countless other times in the past century, Eastern Europeans began to see the promise of catching up with the West – a region often resentfully seen as complicit with their impoverishment - dissipate before their eyes, and many directed their anger at former communists that, in their eyes, endangered national progress. The notion that communism lingers inconspicuously in the present may be part of popular parlance but, in recent years, has been sustained by official, state-funded memory institutes that, as the Terror House, develop a wide array of research and public education practices. Invariably creations of the post-communist right (See Appendix), memory institutes constitute by now an internationally-linked institutional apparatus entrusted with inculcating an official and scholarly account of the region's turbulent 20th century history, one at odds with the historiographic mainstream. Invoking the expertise of memory institutes, post-communist elites have leveraged EU membership to invigorate an anti-totalitarian imagery of communism, whereby the latter is an entirely external imposition that, similarly to Nazism, is defined by the ubiquity of terror. Most prominently, the EP approved a European Day of Remembrance for the victims of Stalinism and Nazism on August 23, reversing a decades-long EU initiative to institute the Holocaust as its negative founding formula (Neumayer 2015:13).

This symbolic hegemony, consistently pushed in politics, historiography and at the level of the EU's bureaucracy (the Eurocracy), is surprising on several accounts: By the late 1990s, anti-communism's mobilization potential, so powerful during the first democratic elections, appeared exhausted. The post-communist right had experimented with several variants of transitional justice: official condemnations, lustrations, trials and restitutions provided a constant stream of ammunition against the former communist left, but all measures proved unsatisfying to their proponents or backfired. In the mid-1990s, as market reforms had a deteriorating impact on the majority's living standards, voters returned socialist parties to power, seemingly indifferent to the right's fixation with the past. However, by the mid 2000s the symbolic capital of anti-communism is seemingly no longer up for grabs in the political field: instead, it is stored, administered and apportioned by memory institutes invariably set-up by right-wing governments. Suffused with scientific legitimacy, the scope and direction for the political exploitation of anticommunism is reduced considerably, but for those who control this symbolic capital, it markedly increases its potency.

The first question I pose thus pertains to how we got from failed mobilization to a durable symbolic advantage: *Why did the right persist with anti-communism, why was it successful and what means did they use to seize the collective memory of communism?* I venture that the hegemony of an anti-totalitarian memory in Central and Eastern Europe is not equivalent to collective memory's crushing hegemony in every aspect of life in post-communist societies. Rather, it is indicative of the presence of an often subdued, but perennially available repertoire of representations that, through an elaborate ensemble of alliances, can be thrusted to overpowering relevance. Memory institutes secure this durable symbolic advantage in multiple ways. They are headed by political appointees, their scientific councils carefully selected to sustain the research directions and

narratives favored by political patrons, and their multifaceted practices, such as publicized historical research, museum exhibits, teacher trainings or media interventions, are systematically embedded in the conceptual universe of anti-totalitarianism. The systematization of memory politics they bring about adds a dense coating to the multiple layers of symbolic advantage cultivated over two decades of post-communism: the prestige and international recognition afforded to the emblems of anti-communist resistance, greeted and welcomed all over the world as symbols of freedom and democracy; the generalized discrediting of social democratic or socialist alternatives in a global conjuncture that celebrated free markets as the only viable route for development, forcing socialist parties to compromise principles for pragmatism, and making them vulnerable to charges of hypocrisy; the lustration laws and the discussions that accompanied them, which created a sense of societal alarm over unpatriotic communist cadres still lurking in the invisible corridors of power; the corruption scandals that, while not exclusive to the left, the right strategically linked to a supposedly enduring communist 'ethos' (Zhurzhenko 2007:3).

Once revealed, instances of dishonesty, corruption, abuse of power or influence peddling will damage any political actor, but the post-communist left is often incapable of shaking off deeply ingrained notions that the illicit deals between politics and business are part and parcel of its political *ethos*. The Polish and Hungarian experiences with corruption help illustrate the vulnerabilities and safeguards respectively afforded by symbolic stigmatization and advantage. As the 2010 elections approached in Hungary, the arrest of former Budapest Transport Company (BKV) chief Attila Antal pointed to illicit campaign financing schemes that tied him to the governing socialists. In a context of four years of austerity policies, the scandal allowed the right-wing opposition to highlight the hypocrisy and immorality of the governing socialists, exposed as deeply enmeshed in illegitimate networks of influence and as indifferent to their socially

vulnerable voters. Cases of financial abuses by politicians had the greatest negative impact on the outgoing socialist government, and corruption, particularly the BKV scandal, dominated the news coverage as well as the opposition campaign during their last 10 months in office (Biró Nagy and Róna 2012:14). In a similar fashion, the Rywin affair in Poland was to epitomize former communist cliques' hold over the state and was widely acknowledged as a key factor in the marginalization of the Polish left (Zarycki, 2009:626). The affair began with an attempt to request a bribe from Adam Michnik, former dissident and editor of the biggest Polish daily *Gazeta Wyborcza*, and culminated with cover-up efforts involving the higher echelons of power, then occupied by the socialists. A New York Times report at the time went as far as claiming the controversy "resonated beyond … [Poland's] borders as an example of the suspected cozy and shadowy links between politicians and wealthy business figures" (Green 2003). Between 2003 and 2004 the governing Democratic Left Alliance lost 24 percentage points in support, and as in the Hungarian case, austerity measures that ran counter to electoral promises lead to an overall a loss of "normative credibility" (Innes 2014:96). Hence, both austerity and corruption played into a more encompassing perception of former communists as irremediably dishonest –through corruption, but also in their implementation of austerity, which betrayed their constituency, beliefs, and pre-electoral promises.

Poland's Democratic Left Alliance and Hungary's Socialist Party have since become politically marginal, and in what was an electoral endorsement of anti-communist normative claims, both leftist defeats were followed by the most socially conservative and anti-communist governments the two countries had seen –Fidesz in Hungary and Law and Justice (PiS) in Poland. But the ostensibly irremediable outing of socialist parties did not produce much in the way of abating corruption. PiS and Fidesz have presided over a deterioration of corruption control mechanisms

(Innes 2014:89), and Fidesz's 2010 election coincided with state capture and the empowerment of organizations vulnerable to corruption (Fazekas and Tóth 2016:321). Corruption has not escaped public scrutiny and the issue retains visibility. In Hungary the term "mafia state" has entered popular parlance to describe the current state of affairs, inspiring the title of the popular 2013 book *Hungarian Octopus: The Post-Communist Mafia State* (Magyar Polip: a posztkommunista maffiaállam) (Magyar 2016). Yet nothing resembling the socialist debacle has transpired among Fidesz supporters: a January poll gives the party 54 percent of the vote (Nézőpont 2018), and Orbán is poised for a third consecutive term in the April 2018 elections.

In sum, political sins are not exclusive to the left, but their irreparability may be. Here lies the key to the right's durable symbolic advantage, and the reason why mnemonic warriors remain resolutely committed to anti-communism even after its earlier electoral failures. As a response to the advantages in insider expertise, organizational skills and experience socialist parties inherited from their communist predecessors, betting on the symbolic turf was an irresistible proposition. Within it, socialists remain structurally crippled by their more or less socially constructed proximity to a recent, turbulent history[2]. The transitions of 1989-1990 already marked a critical juncture for the development of political competition. Attitudes towards the past became the initiatory matrix for the emerging democratic system (Bornschier 2009:5; Hlousek and Kopeček 2008:520), at a time where the question of rejecting or endorsing communism was more than merely symbolic. But as in subsequent years the overriding political imperative of EU and NATO membership impelled a cross-party consensus and substantial programmatic constraints, political

[2] The right's proximity to authoritarian, inter-war regimes or to Nazi-collaborating groups is much harder to establish both institutionally and individually, more so as most inter-war political groups were suppressed or eliminated during state socialism, curtailing any potential for continuity beyond supposed ideological affinities.

differentiation was further encouraged along emblematic lines. The right's ability to frame political debate in terms of attitudes towards the past had worked in the first democratic elections, and the theme never quite disappeared, albeit it evolved. Anti-communism now highlighted the supposed persistence of communist-era *ethos* and practices behind the formal façade of democracy, continuously driving the left to devote political resources on defensive strategies while limiting its agenda-setting power. While competing ideological cleavages have been emphasized by political players –secularism vs religion in Poland, cosmopolitanism vs nationalism in Hungary, free market vs. redistribution in the Czech Republic – anti-communism has successfully grafted itself onto these divides, perpetuating the symbolic imbalances that haunt the left.

The remainder of this dissertation will explore these symbolic themes in fuller depth, tracing the right's efforts to black-box an anti-totalitarian memory across formally separated realms, particularly the political, scholarly and Eurocratic, as a fundamentally political enterprise. Through this examination, the challenges posed by the vaguely defined concept of collective memory will be confronted. Collective memory has been studied from a variety of perspectives, namely psychological, cultural, literary, political and social, inviting interdisciplinary endeavors, that have however struggled to advance a theoretically generative dialogue. I don't argue that this ambition should be altogether abandoned, but that instead we begin treating memory studies as a discipline in its own right, one that unfolds in a number of subdisciplines whose theoretical development begs for segmented elaboration. The case I bring is relevant to the subdiscipline of *memory politics*, as it explores *how collective memory is coherently and consistently articulated in separate fields to produce a regime of remembrance.* As I argue further ahead, this examination reveals an important distinction: if collective memory is an unending process of societal negotiation, of struggles for hegemony, recognition, institutionalization or forgetting, a regime of remembrance

represents the synchronic capture of this process by a political constellation bent on legitimating specific identities, interests and agendas. A critical engagement with the distinctive dynamics of memory politics thus requires us to ask how memory moves from struggle, contestation and instability to a hard identity that projects sameness, permanence and homogeneity. The polarization of attitudes towards the past in post-communism provides an invaluable opportunity to explore the more minute aspects of this process: the tireless efforts required to ensure consistency across highly fractured post-communist societies are likely to reveal mechanisms of domination and co-optation that would remain unnoticed in more consensual polities.

I propose approaching this task by envisioning collective memory as a process articulated within fields of organized struggle, one that only assumes the semblance of a memory regime through consistent efforts to coordinate these struggles across said fields. By doing so, I also aim to make a broader contribution to field theory: As I will show in the following chapters, collective memory's increasingly uniform facade across fields owes much to the emergence of the above-mentioned memory institutes and the transactions and compromises occurring through them. Rather than static institutions, these interstitial bodies invigorate, regulate and accommodate mnemonic flows across diverse realms, but do so in generative ways, leading, as I shall argue, to the emergence of a novel, mnemonic field. This realization opens up possibilities to improve our knowledge of *why and how fields emerge*, as the fundamental rearrangement of the post-communist social structure offers a lens through which we can grasp a process that is generally far more gradual and leaves few empirical traces in its wake (Fligstein and McAdam 2012:165).

## 1. The Bricolage of Collective Memory

Our concern with memory is very much grounded in a deeply ingrained disquiet with our contemporary predicament, a historical self-awareness that is inseparable from collective

insecurities precipitated by globalization. The term "memory boom" conveys the severity of this condition (Huyssen, 1995), manifested by all kinds of public practices of memorialization in the fields of politics, culture and science, including in the young but burgeoning academic subfield of memory studies. Memory seems to respond to a need to ground a shifting present by connecting it with a reassuring, immutable past, "a form of neoconservative 'comfort' and 'cultural compensation' for the social and psychological dislocations caused by an 'accelerated' or even 'second' modernity" (Müller 2002:16). Yet most social theorists have eschewed memory, and most studies of memory remain profoundly bounded to the idiosyncratic methods and concepts developed for specific cases (Olick 2006:8). Within the subdiscipline of memory politics, Müller has noted that while there is broad agreement that memory matters politically, we know very little about how this importance is manifested (2002:2). By drawing on field theory (Bourdieu 1984; 1996) and using insights from actor-network theory (Latour 1987), this section proposes a common theoretical thread for understanding *memory politics,* one that accommodates the theoretical insights required for fully grasping collective memory's move from unpredictable struggle to stable identity. I begin by taking a position in the conceptual debate around collective memory, and its implications for delimiting memory politics as a subdiscipline of memory studies.

Precisely what these collective memories are and how they are formed been the subject of extensive debate in the collective memory scholarship. Explanations of collective memory that derive their analytical frameworks from psychology have been discredited, but the dangers of reification still loom large. More often than not, this reflects an unconscious application of the conceptual toolkit borrowed from psychology, by which the scholar takes the metaphors of individual memory for granted and all too literally attributes to collectivities the mechanisms and properties of individual psyches. Collective memory is thus variously caught recollecting,

forgetting, or dealing with trauma. This remains particularly the case with most regional overviews of post-communist collective memory (Challand 2009; Kattago 2009; Leggewie 2010; Mälksoo 2009; Verovšek 2015), whereby Eastern European political elites are merely delegated with the task of conveying a previously subdued and vaguely located collective memory of a society that demands hearing out.

However, no contemporary scholar would deny that there is a dialectic relation at play between individual and collective memory. Rather, disagreement is usually centered on which particular direction of causality is emphasized. Individual memories provide essential building blocks to the cultural and social construct that is collective memory, and this aspect of the relationship is stressed particularly in political discourse, where a supposedly shared history may engender legitimating effects for specific political identities. At the same time, Halbwachs (1992:37-40) observation that collectively meaningful historical interpretations structure the cognitive and neurological configuration of individual memories has not only been internalized by memory scholars, but also corroborated by current psychological research (Schacter 1995). This current has led to the development of a presentist, or instrumentalist approach, one that inspires the development of studies in memory politics, and whose most prominent representative is Hobsbawm. The British historian famously introduced the term "invented traditions" to emphasize the ability of political actors to invent or manipulate symbols and notions of the past in the pursuit of partisan or state interest (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). While some of his critics have accused him of placing excessive weight on political elites' ability to shape perceptions of the past, Hobsbawm sowed the seeds for a growing awareness that "past-oriented meaning frameworks are prominent modes of legitimation and explanation" (Olick and Robbins 1998:108).

In an attempt to move the discussion forward, Olick has criticized both approaches for placing collective memory either an independent or a dependent variable, or both, taking for granted the very phenomenon it supposedly explains (2006:8). Recently, other scholars have expressed similar concerns. Bell (2008:155) has argued that the concept of collective memory concept is often bestowed with a static immanence that conceals its fundamentally processual nature. Sturken (2008:74) implicitly makes the same critique by suggesting we think of memory in terms of practices that convey the cultural negotiation of memory in the praxis of individuals, groups and institutions, rather than its apprehension in objects or sites of memory. In other words, collective memory "refers to a wide variety of mnemonic products and practices" that represent different "moments in a dynamic process" (Olick 2006:12). Collective memory would thus be better grasped in terms of the dialectic, iterative oscillations between individual memory and cognition, the shared meanings we attach to memories, and their material and institutional inscription in an extensive array of realms.

While an enormous step in the right direction, Olick's critique did not solve all the tensions inherent in the discipline, particularly its profound relation to the concept of identity. Olick and Robbins have called memory the "central medium through which identity is constituted" (1998:133), whereas Nora goes as far as asserting they "have become all but synonymous" (2002:9). For most of the twentieth century memory was mostly deployed by nation-states seeking to exploit the past to forge a cohesive identity, although the last decades have seen "a self-reflexive turning point attributing legitimacy to nation transforming forms of memory" (Levy 2011:489). But national forms of identity have overwhelmingly remained 'hard', connoting sameness, permanence across time and space, group boundedness and homogeneity (Brubaker and Cooper 2000:10-11).

As this short overview illustrates, memory seems to be doing too many things. And as with any concept that is overstretched, it risks becoming meaningless and analytically impractical. But the literature on collective memory has done more than assigning an unreasonably wide scope of activity to collective memory: it has left it with a seemingly unresolvable contradiction. Collective memory is supposedly dynamic and processual, it is expressed and reformulated through and in individual and collective practices, practices which have various social moments and that cannot be encapsulated in a single social domain. At the same time, collective memory is deemed an essential component, or even a synonym, of identity. An identity that, more often than not, is studied in its 'hard', national or ethnic manifestations, rather than the fluid, interchangeable variants of post-modernity. In these accounts, collective memory is an antidote to the insecurities conjured by a fast-changing world, allowing subjects to relate to a comforting unchanging past.

I will not venture another definition of collective memory in what is a relatively saturated debate. Instead of suggesting a specific side of the debate on collective memory has misinterpreted it as overly dynamic or static, I suggest this discussion can be advanced by shifting our attention from the question of *what* is collective memory, to the political question of *how* communities interiorize a collective memory as natural, representative and encompassing. This concern is hardly new: Halbwachs had noted that mnemonic agents bent on conveying stable meanings will seek to capture the fluctuations of collective memory through formal storage and interpretation (1992:24). More recently, Assmann underlined precisely why this capture is ultimately a political question: "As we pass the shadow line from short-term to long-term durability, an embodied, implicit, heterogenous, and fuzzy bottom-up memory is transformed into an explicit, homogeneous, and institutionalized top-down memory … Hence a political memory is necessarily a mediated

memory. It resides in material media, symbols and practices which have to be engrafted into the hearts and minds of individuals" (Assmann 2006:215-6)

Müller has made a somewhat similar distinction between what he calls the mass individual memories of historical events directly witnessed by individuals, and a "collective, social or national" memory that provides the social framework through which individuals may relate to their history (2002:20), although we are left with no systematic account of the social mechanisms that lead from the first to the second.

To reiterate, memory politics should ask *how* unofficial, spontaneous memories become entangled with official memories in the exercise of power, it should unearth the *work* that goes into extracting a mnemonic identity out of a complex web of social and power relations, and into giving it wider societal resonance. With this in mind, I suggest we distinguish the fluid process of collective memory from one of its essential components, the *regime of remembrance.* The latter is entrusted with producing a political identity and disciplining collective memory's oscillations in order to safeguard said identity. More mundanely, regime of remembrance refers to the set of official, institutionalized practices that embody how the polity promotes opportunities for citizens to relate to their past (Dujisin 2015). It can be distilled into two, partly overlapping analytical components: (1) a mnemonic substance, which is the content evocated as the collective memory of the community, its founding myths and historical interpretations; (2) the regime's mode of remembrance, which answers the question of why we should remember and how we engage with a particular mnemonic substance. In other words, it responds to an injunction to remember by which memory is problematized, citizens reminded of their duty to remember, and political cultures reaffirmed (Eyal 2004:9).

What makes the study of memory politics both challenging and fascinating is precisely that regimes of remembrance are built to naturalize their attendant identities in ways that obscure the actors and interests constituting them, meaning the processes leading up to their enshrinement will not always leave obvious traces. This raises the question of how to unpack regimes of remembrance in ways that reveal their constitutive elements and interests, from which we may begin grasping why certain memories succeed whereas others fail. The diffusion of collective memory suggests that this complex process engages a variety of actors operating from within diverse domains: Politics, civil society, media, the judiciary, or academia, variously provide arenas for memory to unfold. Often, but not necessarily linked to the state, collective memory thus resides in domains as diverse as museums, art galleries, record offices, the educational system, the public media or newspapers (Johnson and Dawson 1982: 208-9). Yet as a shifting and socially mediated entity, constantly invoked and reinterpreted across realms, collective memory never quite sojourns in merely one domain. Selecting one of these domains and treating it as a bounded, isolated reality risks overlooking precisely those constant invocations and contingencies that endow the concept with its processual, dynamic properties. The challenge thus lies in treating memory relationally, not just within the scope of any given local order, but across them as well. In what follows, I propose a new, systematic approach that can accommodate the indisputably diffuse nature of collective memory and help us make sense of how an array of structures, discourses and agencies eventually coalesce into a regime of remembrance.

## 2. The Field Theory Solution

While much work on collective memory pays lip service to its relational nature, few scholars in the discipline have expressly produced a theoretical framework that treats memory accordingly. Field theory, most significantly developed in the social sciences by Pierre Bourdieu, provides a

suitable approach that has moreover been applied to several areas relevant to memory studies, such as academia (Bourdieu 1984), history (Steinmetz 2008), art and literature (Bourdieu 1996; Sapiro 2003), politics (Singh 2016), or regional integration (Georgakakis and Rowell 2013; Vauchez and Mudge 2012). What all these applications of field theory share is an epistemological preference for seeing the social world as driven by complex webs of relations, rather than direct causal lines linking independent and dependent variables. A field is "a network, or configuration, of objective relations between positions" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:97), positions that are variously occupied by actors, agents and institutions who strive for the specific profits and prizes at stake in the field, as well as over the rules that define this "game" (Martin 2003:31). These prizes can be products, recognition, status, services, goods or knowledge, and agents' success in reaping these rewards is conditional on their capacity to accumulate relevant forms of capital. Capital denotes a particular species of power or domination recognized as legitimate in attaining said prizes – status, goods - by all actors operating in the field. Bourdieu traditionally defines four types of capital: Economic, social, cultural and symbolic, offering original definitions of the last three. Social capital denotes the benefits that accrue from one's personal and professional networks; Cultural capital refers to all types of conscious and unconscious cultural dispositions as well as to qualifications, competences and skills that endow their holders with authority and prestige; symbolic capital refers to informal but socially resonant categories of honor and prestige that are bestowed upon certain individuals. Throughout the dissertation I will retain this meaning of the concept but will qualify it by arguing that once in possession of it, symbolic capital also increases an actor's leeway to interpret, invoke and manipulate symbols, cultural references and historical interpretations. In a certain sense, symbolic capital qualifies its holder to adopt the role of a moral compass of large groups bound by a common identity. All other forms of capital are generally

slight variations of the above. It is important to note that the principles of distribution, evaluation and measurement of such forms of capital are often the object of dispute – although they are also tempered by dynamics of cooperation and mutual recognition (Steinmetz, 2008:596).

Actors' possession of capital, as well as the principles of its distribution, determine the overall configuration of positions in the field. In other words, agents' capital possessions, their potential for capital accumulation, as well as their relations of subordination, domination or parity, jointly determine the structure of the field. Since each field values and recognizes as legitimate a restricted set of capital species, each field also prescribes its own specific interests on participants in the game, a particular *illusio,* "as tacit recognition of the value of the stakes of the game and as practical mastery of its rules" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:117). Each position within the field thus corresponds to a particular *role*, one that prescribes a slight variation of said *illusio* through both informal and formal (institutionalized) mechanisms. Thus, the concept of field encourages us to embrace social practices that are weakly institutionalized as consequential to the phenomena under analysis.

Movement within a field is ultimately determined by the gravitational pulls occasioned by the interaction between the specific role-demands of each position, and the specific *habitus* each player brings into the game. A central concept in Bourdieu's social theory, the habitus of individuals refers to the set of embodied cultural dispositions that filter their perception of the world as well as their reactions to it, reflecting a unique social trajectory. However, each individual habitus is also molded by institutionalized as well as informal forces of socialization that are common to large social groups, making their capital accumulation patterns and strategies fairly predictable. Operating below the level of explicit ideology, an agents' habitus will ultimately shape the constraints and opportunities available to circulate and advance within a given field. A far cry

from structural determinism, this understanding of field theory merely posits that it is the interaction between the inherited and embodied dispositions of the habitus and the structure of the field that induces motions within it. While the field is constantly and unconsciously reproduced by agents' habituses, the latter bring to bear unique intersection of structures into the field – everyone embodies a specific combination of familial socialization, schooling or media exposure, to name a few, notwithstanding the substantial cultural overlaps occasioned by the ubiquity of these socializing structures. As a result, the reproduction of field structures inevitably incorporates a degree of ambiguity and encourages a modicum of change, driven as it is by the constant interplay between individual habituses and the role demands of individuals' respective field positions (Martin 2003: 22-3; 27-8). To rephrase, individuals' social trajectories contribute to their motions within the field, but so does their implicit acceptance of the interests prescribed by the field they enter. This is, to my knowledge, how agency should be broadly conceptualized in field theoretical terms.

While not all the social structure can be fit into field categories, it is within fields that the struggles for power in a given society are settled, particularly in a hegemonic *field of power* where hierarchies of capital -their ultimate value - and bases of legitimation are determined and trickle down to subordinated fields. In Bourdieu's view, the struggle for power among those who populate this meta-field – the dominant classes - is determined by their relative possession of two forms of capital: A dominant, economic capital, and a subordinate cultural capital, that denotes various forms of credentialized and non-credentialized knowledge and dispositions. All other fields represent attempts to carve out an autonomous space of action from the encompassing dynamics imposed by the field of power, although this autonomy is always relative: the field has to grapple

with external causal chains (Steinmetz, 2008:595) – hence the relativity – but this influence is nevertheless mediated by the structure of the field – hence the autonomy.

There are several advantages to this approach that correct some of the epistemological shortcomings of memory studies. By suggesting we think about power as occurring relationally, we heed Halbwachs' call to treat memory not simply as a subjective matter but as a socially mediated phenomenon (1993). Field theory upgrades our ability to analyze collective memory as conflictive, as the concept itself suggests: terms such as "milieu" "context" or "social background" are too "positive" to underscore conflictive social dynamics (Swartz 2012:119). Instead, the concept of field underscores precisely this conflictual dimension of social life, as suggested by instrumentalist approaches (Bodnar 1992; Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983; Müller 2002), envisioning various potential mediating realms where struggles over memory can be resolved. Returning to the distinction between collective memory as a societal negotiation, and a regime of remembrance as an attempt to systematically intervene on this process for purposes of identity production, field analysis offers an opportunity to highlight the mechanisms responsible for enshrining certain identities over others. The field approach allows us to delineate the competing networks and the strategies of mnemonic 'funneling' used to advance their goals by reference to how the field is structured. The varying success of different strategies is therefore accounted for by reference to the historically-determined genesis and structure of fields, the forms of capital it consequentially recognizes and rewards, and the typologies of habitus by which actors holds or have the potential to hold those species of capital. The centrality of collective memory's role in these struggles will vary according to the field. Typically, it will manifest itself in actors' attempts to accumulate symbolic capital to legitimate their field navigation strategies – and/or delegitimize those of rivals - by invoking historically resonant cultural codes and political identities. These

resonant codes and identities, through their influence on the individual habituses through which the social structure is reproduced, can in turn be expected to shape the configuration of fields, namely what species of capital confer field-specific rewards. In this manner, their resonance is constantly reproduced in both conscious and unconscious ways, setting concrete limits to agents' ability to mold collective memory to their liking. Finally, field theory moves us beyond the formalistic perils of institutionalist approaches by identifying field effects independently of their inscription in well recognized institutional practices, bringing informal dimensions of power to the fore that are essential to how memory exerts its influence in social life. Moreover, these realms are treated as abstract spaces where formal and informal mechanisms exert and distribute power, encouraging the transgression of national frameworks that tends to limit scholarly musings on collective memory.

In sum, fields – whether political, journalistic or academic - provide a framework within which the abstract flux of individual memories, collective meanings, and institutional inscription converges into an intelligible narrative. Field analysis offers the tools to contemplate these interventions as contingent and meaningful, embedded in institutional and spatial arrangements that are consequential to the range of memory's oscillations. But how does collective memory assume the semblance of an identity, how is a regime of remembrance established to enshrine this identity as the dominant player in the mnemonic game? If "It is an implicit rule that participants in any social order must presuppose a shared memory" (Connerton 1989:3) how are the multiple, field-bound rearticulations of collective memory amalgamated, negotiated and re-adapted across realms to produce the sort of coherence a hard identity demands? In other words, how is collective memory assembled and black-boxed into a memory regime?

## 3. The Spaces between Fields

The above questions automatically direct us to the issue of the relations between fields. Field theory has only recently witnessed a growth in interest in this issue, hitherto dominated by Bourdieuan visions of fields as nested onto each other in hierarchical fashion. As Bourdieu himself conceded, relations between fields do not seem to follow transhistoric laws (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:109), since each field is relatively autonomous and directed by its "own internal temporality, pace, and rhythm" (Steinmetz 2011:55). The absence of an overarching set of rules governing cross-field interactions presupposes that various ad-hoc order emerge to oversee them, orders contingent on the unique dialectic created by their encounter. These should develop in an area of friction or overlap between fields where these different temporalities, paces and rhythms are somehow reconciled through sustained interaction. In the case of collective memory this multiplicity of orders poses a serious challenge: How to envision the coalescing of multiple mnemonic practices into a coherent regime of remembrance?

Before answering this question, we need to take a step back and consider the social topographies where such local orders may emerge. Eyal (2013:162) suggests we reconsider the role of boundaries as lines which mark the end of one field and the beginning of another, and start treating them as the indispensable social entity they are: One with enough volume to accommodate the struggles, flows and exchanges between fields. In this view, these spaces generate mechanisms indispensable to the existence of fields as relatively bounded and coherent entities, but also allow the mobilization of resources and allies across them. Furthermore, following Callon (1998:9), who envisions agency as tied to the morphology of actor's relations rather than to any of their immanent characteristics, I venture that interstitial actors, located in the more ambiguous and arbitrary networks at the intersections of fields, embody less constrained modalities of agency. In other

words, such liminal actors are in a privileged position to reach the resources that populate fields and negotiate the terms of their relations. For our purposes, this requires a sensitivity to how interstitial actors secure the production and reproduction of a regime of remembrance by recruiting human (politicians, scholars, victims, or perpetrators), material (archives, museums or memorials) and discursive devices across fields to conjure resonant cultural and historical frames. I follow Eyal (2013) in arguing that this modality of cross-field agency is better grasped by invoking Latourian actor-network theory, as the latter shifts our attention beyond bounded realities or particular components and reformulates the question in terms of how an ensemble of devices is pieced together across boundaries, of how allies are recruited and interests translated across realms that, in principle, prescribe different interests and operate under different discourses. In this reading, in line with Callon's formulation of agency, the immanent characteristics of a component are not the source of the observed power. Rather, it is by virtue of a component's entanglement in a larger ensemble that power circulates through it.

This is no simple task and requires a great deal of negotiation, translation and compromise. A fact all too visible in matters of memory politics, which can be reformulated as the practices necessary to capture the cross-field flux of collective memory for purposes of establishing a regime of remembrance – now understood as a network drawing resources across disparate fields that is tasked with maintaining the identity of shared memory. Regimes of remembrance can thus be quite fluid in their composition: No single element in the network is indispensable, although shifts have to be managed carefully and gradually. The collective identity or allegedly shared memory they put forth, is however, much more resilient and rigid than the societal mnemonic process of which it is an important player, but only one of the players. The proponents of this identity will therefore typically "posture as if the past is incontestably unitary, as unitary as the social group they claim

to represent and whose divisions they cannot admit without losing a sense of identity and the right to act in its name" (Olick 2006:8).

But how is this task carried out? The point is not -necessarily - to make memory central to the struggles of any given field and to ensure a particular narrative emerges unconditionally victorious. Rather, it is to ensure that the resources mobilized from various fields are linked together in coherent ways, and that these resources are central enough to their field to sustain the overall societal resonance of their accompanying identities. For purposes of identity construction, a historical interpretation that is dominant in a historiographic field, but fails to resonate in the spheres of politics, media or society at large, is less suitable for identity building than a narrative that warrants this resonance while being in a subordinate position in historiography proper. The point of cross-field alliances is to distribute these struggles, to make them more manageable, to sustain the resonance of a specific historical interpretation so that those who subscribe to its attendant identity can find an additional source of validation. This fundamentally political exercise of backgrounding certain socio-historic linkages while foregrounding others is facilitated by memory's psychological vulnerability to distortion (Schacter 1995). Individual memories lend themselves to a facile absorption into larger structures that highlight or suppress them, they exhibit connective and adaptive properties that encourage linkages with wider networks of memories, leading to their social readaptation (Assmann 2006:213).

A regime's effectiveness will thus fundamentally be predicated on an ability to black-box the necessary choices, negotiations and exclusions that sustain a political identity, while maintaining the illusion of a stable, representative, and consensual collective memory. At no point this is meant to imply that memory doesn't serve other purposes, or that all actors recruited by the network are aware of its implications. The point is to analyze the complex mnemonic practices that are

entangled with exercises in political legitimation, their actual effects on power mechanisms rather than the intentions or motivations of individual actors.

## 4. Case Selection

Struggles over memory are worked out in a number of fields that to various degrees and through different modalities, intersect with the field of power: the political, historiographic and Eurocratic fields. This selection follows a prolonged engagement with the existing literature on post-communist memory politics and around 40 in-depth interviews with specialists and insiders, from which I conclude that these three fields are the most generative in terms of producing forms of capital convertible to the symbolic capital of anti-communism. As can be deduced from the previous section, the collective memory of post-communism unfolds in several fields, but both parsimony and the theoretical question driving this inquiry requires a focus that privileges fields consistently indicated by primary and secondary sources as highly consequential to assembling the regime of remembrance under investigation.

In large part due to the absence of a propertied domestic bourgeoisie, the post-communist field of power has been traditionally dominated by holders of cultural capital rather than of economic capital, in contrast to Western Europe. This puts the professionals, the technical intelligentsia, as well as those with the capacity to manipulate symbols, in prominent positions within said field (Eyal et al. 1997:91). The legitimacy of intellectual rule and of its moral and spiritual leadership has furthermore been a feature that historically distinguishes Central and Eastern Europe from the rest of the continent (Eyal et al. 1998:56). The demise of communism revitalized this capital hierarchy as several political formations flourished out of former intellectual dissident circles, a pattern whose pertinence extends beyond the strictly Central European region and is most poignantly evidenced by the composition of Estonia's first democratic government, known as the

"Republic of Historians" (Tamm 2016). Some of the most prominent symbolic themes of the post-communist era – Return to Europe, Anti-Totalitarianism, National liberation, National sovereignty – were thrown into prominence by such politically engaged intellectual communities, who couched them in overt or covert references to the communist past and an explicit or implicit assessment of communism's nature and historical role in larger national narratives. These same intellectuals helped articulate the first elections as stark choices between a communist, alien past and a democratic, patriotic future, establishing a critical juncture that would shape the region's political cleavages well into the 21st century.

Politics thus provides a prominent arena for memory struggles to unfold and for the legitimation of political agendas, warranting the focus on the political field. But as was just mentioned, struggles over interpretations of the past have been framed in terms of cultural themes first elaborated by former dissident intellectual communities, boosting the prominence of symbolic capital – particularly in its moral, legitimating role - in enacting the hierarchies of the field of power. But memory work, while often driven by actors rich in symbolic capital, cannot exclusively rely on it, and has historically sought validation in the specific forms of cultural capital distributed within historiographic fields. Memory and history have always entertained an intense, frequently competitive relation, and its specific post-communist incarnation requires further exploration that what has hitherto been warranted by memory scholarship in the region. However, while many influential intellectuals of post-communism were indeed historians, many were not. The first post-communist President of Czechoslovakia, Václav Havel, was a playwriter and essayist. János Kis, the first party leader of the Hungarian liberal party, was a political philosopher. The first prime-minister of democratic Poland, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, was a journalist and Catholic intellectual. Vytautas Landsbergis, first head of state of independent Lithuania, was a musician. Yet many of

the prominent dissident intellectuals have since lost salience, either retrieving to their intellectual ivory towers after a disappointing political experience or pushed out of politics by an increasingly professionalized industry. While many of the cultural and historical themes they promoted remain relevant, they no longer hold a monopoly over their interpretation, or over their evocation for legitimating or denouncing political agendas. Instead, this role is increasingly taken up by memory institutes, institutional actors with a solid footing in historiographic fields, who seek to legitimate old dissident themes on a more sober, less personalistic, and scientific foundation. Assessing their role, position and perception in the historiographic field is thus of essence to grasping the cross-field arrangements that constitute the post-communist memory regime.

Finally, the mention of a Eurocratic field as consequential to collective memory's unfolding may come as a surprise to some regional observers. What is meant by Eurocratic field are the agents and institutions dedicated to European integration and/or to the functioning of EU institutions, including the EC, the EP, the European Council and well-established lobbyists[3]. Their cooperation and competition is guided by multiple, cumulative compromises and formal and informal rules (Georgakakis and Rowell 2013:3-6) that have, throughout the decades of what is known as European integration, established a common frame of ideals, procedures and expectations, a political culture, if we wish. This culture is amenable to challenge, but in lieu of the multiple stakeholders involved in decision-making, change occurs in rather piecemeal fashion. The Eurocracy has, as I will argue, also engaged in memory-building, and its efforts became overt particularly in the 1990s, to the point that we can speak of the institution of a European regime of

[3] Once again, for parsimony's sake I have chosen not to focus on the Council of Europe, which has also provided a platform for struggles over regional remembrance. The different membership of this body – that includes, among others, Russia –would unnecessarily complicate our account of the mnemonic struggles between 'Old' and post-communist member states. Moreover, the Council of Europe lacks the symbolic resonance of the European Union and its resolutions are less frequently invoked by post-communist actors involved in the memory game.

remembrance based on the idea of the uniqueness of the Holocaust and increasingly of European regret for collaboration with Nazi perpetrators.

The mobilization of symbolic resources from the EU seems counter-intuitive if one pays heed to the many recent reports on discursive clashes and political or punitive threats between EU institutions and countries ruled by strong conservative parties such as Hungary and Poland – not to mention the Czech Republic's long-standing tradition of Euroscepticism. Their governments have clashed with EU officials on issues such as refugee quotas, central bank independence or, in more extreme cases, the rule of law. However, partly due to their voters' traditional support for EU membership, partly due to their dependence on EU structural funds, exit from the supranational organization has never been on the table. Historically, the attitudes of Fidesz, Law and Justice or ODS in the Czech Republic have been rather dubitative and soft-Eurosceptic (Kopecky and Mudde 2002), with the latter understood as supportive of EU integration in principle, but critical of the organization's actual development (Lázár 2007:224). Post-communist Euroscepticism ideally envisions a "Europe of Nation States", where sovereignty and the protection of national interests rule supreme, where no country can be treated as a second-rank member, and where regional structures can be exploited for promoting, but never imposing political agendas. This model is perfectly compatible with post-communist interventions in the symbolic sphere of EU politics, not only in terms of memory politics. To give a most recent example, the insistence on national sovereignty during the "Syrian refugee crisis", translated in a rejection of EU imposed quotas for settling refugees in Central and Eastern Europe, has done little to temper Polish and Hungarian calls for preserving a Europe – not a Poland, or a Hungary - based on a common Christian heritage (Karnitschnig 2015).

The mobilization of EU institutions for purposes of generating anti-communist symbolic capital has had to grapple with the extant structure of the Eurocratic field, one that privileges the rather incompatible mnemonic identity of Holocaust uniqueness. Incompatible because, while post-communist countries have nurtured narratives that exonerate the local population and the nation for the crimes of both communism and Nazism, emphasizing instead historical narratives of heroism and resistance, the European Union and much of Western Europe have moved on from precisely such an attitude of externalization, to one of admission of guilt and highlighting complicity with Nazi crimes. This leads me to describe the movements of anti-communist political entrepreneurs as *incursions,* in order to distinguish them from instances of *colonization*. In its Foucauldian understanding, colonization conveys the process by which the mechanisms and rationality of a given power system transform and subordinate those of another, attuning its original logic to serve novel purposes. An incursion, conversely, signals a different interaction, one in which the incoming order, lacking the clout, means or resources to colonize another one, finds cracks from which to obtain long-term symbolic or material gains without fundamentally altering the logic and purposes of the invaded system. Such "raids" give actors in adjacent fields the opportunity to enter another one, "rapidly amassing profits, and rapidly retreat[ing] into their original fields, where these profits may be reconverted into currency that will improve one's formerly marginal position within it" (Eyal 2013:178). As I will show in later chapters, the concept of incursion provides a faithful description of the partial capture of the EU's agenda by means of rotating EU presidencies, under which anti-communist political entrepreneurs may temporarily redirect EU institutions to generate symbolic and institutional resources that can be reconverted in their domestic political fields, without however fundamentally altering the Eurocratic order.

The substantiation of the political, historiographic and Eurocratic fields as highly consequential to the formation of an anti-totalitarian memory regime is deeply tied to our principal empirical object, the memory institute. There are multiple reasons to group them as a legitimate and intriguing analytical category. First and foremost, they invariably govern state-sponsored mnemonic production and are consistently found in the liminal space between politics and academia (and increasing in the Eurocracy), primarily engaging in practices of academic research, public education, and disclosure of communist-era files. These hybrid institutes are also worthy objects of investigation as the most advanced incarnation of post-communist politics of truth, whereby the identity they produce and seek to instill makes claim to exclusive veracity on account of their scientific pedigree. The politics of truth of anti-communism resonate with Mills radical politics of truth: An injunction by which the intellectual is tasked with "the maintenance of an adequate definition of reality", which involves to "find out as much of the truth" as possible, to "deny publicly what he knows to be false" and to act as "the moral conscience" of society. (Mills 2008:134-135). Memory institutes have adopted a similar mission, by claiming to pursue the truth, by denouncing the “false history” of socialist nostalgia, and by providing moral guidance to a society “corrupted” by communism. But while the ideal radical social thinker envisioned by Mills came closer to the isolated, ivory-tower academic - an otherwise untenable position within his historicist and relativist epistemology (Oakes 2014), the empirical observation of post-communist politics of truth directs us to Foucault's conceptualization of regimes of truth, whereby truth does not lie outside power itself but is the product of multiple constrains and social relations that reflect reigning power arrangements (Foucault 1977:13). I define Politics of truth along the latter lines, envisioning it as a collective enterprise linking actors and abstract and material devices across diverse societal realms, reflecting a network that contrives specific power arrangements and whose

ability to generate credible claims to truth is contingent on those same arrangements. The potency of these provisions, that is, the probability that individuals will automatically and unconsciously adopt the discursive prescriptions it conveys, will be directly proportional to their ability to appear as spontaneous and natural to outsiders, rather than as socially located and contingent on carefully crafted alliances. Put differently, politics of truth has a dual function. On the one hand, it invariably attempts to instill the assumption "that there is one social reality to be discovered, one set of facts that constitutes it, and a single, unequivocally valid account of these facts" (Oakes 2014:261). At the same time, it will attempt to background or even conceal the contingency of the arrangements that constitute the corresponding regime of truth. The parallels with our previous definition of regimes of remembrance is no coincidence. Regimes of remembrance are generally truth regimes that are pursued through more or less emphatic politics of truth.

Memory institutes' ability to convey politics of truth is inextricably tied to their state-sponsored nature. While the state is not unique in shaping collective memories, state actors provide the "dominant force that supplies categories to articulate and legitimize nationhood" (Levy and Dierkes 2002:244), and necessarily such articulation involves selecting, interpreting and deploying suitable historical interpretations. State actors' proximity to the official administrative apparatus eases the mobilization of public resources for purposes of restructuring relevant fields, something that is often patently obvious in the case of historiography– namely by regulating archival access, establishing or closing down research institutions or encouraging particular research directions. Memory institutes thus provide a prime example of how state resources can be exploited at the service of establishing and restricting certain networks in the pursuit of politics of truth.

But such multifaceted and state-sponsored investment in cross-field memory work is not without precedent, and its most likely blueprint, in spite of proud claims to originality from many heads of

memory institutes, comes from Israel. Yad Vashem, established half a century before memory institutes came to existence, has over the decades developed into a hybrid body that, beyond acting as a memorial to the Holocaust, includes a Holocaust History Museum, archives, a research institute, a publishing house, an internationally-oriented educational center and several other smaller memorials. But post-communist memory institutes have imported more than Yad Vashem's memory techniques: The idea of (re)building a national community by enshrining the collective memory of an unspeakable crime upon a helpless people has proven as popular among the right as it has controversial on the left. Of undeniable political significance, particularly in shaping Israeli identity and its relations to foreign countries, Yad Vashem's activities are however not embedded in domestic political competition as post-communist memory institutes are. The latter's idiosyncrasy lies in the concurrency of a state-sponsored effort to bring memory-work to various fields with their subordination to actors consistently positioned on a specific side of a political cleavage. Hence our emphasis on memory politics.

Granted, even when close to the post-communist ideal-typical model, memory institutes are fruitions of specific national trajectories, exhibit considerable variation in their budgets, size and priorities, and such nuances produce distinct field effects worth mentioning.[4] As regards politics, while in East-Central European countries political fields are fractured along post-communist/anti-communist lines and hence memory institutes can bring about major gravitational shifts in competitive politics, in the Baltic region the political field doesn't reveal quite the same fractures in view of the disenfranchisement of the Russian speaking population that generally opposes the

[4] By way of illustration, Poland's memory institute, the largest of its kind, has a staff of 2500 historians (Ł. Michalski, pers. comm., January 2013), whereas Slovakia's had 80 employees (Mink 2013:161), Romania's 40 (A. Muraru, pers. comm., February 2013) and Estonia's eight (T. Hiio, pers. comm., January 2013). These contrasts are striking even if we consider Poland's population (38 million people) is seven times that of, for instance, Slovakia (5.5 million).

dominant regime of remembrance[5]. Hence, Baltic memory politics translate a different set of political concerns: how to counter Russia's influence in the political, cultural and mnemonic spheres of countries with substantial Russian ethnic minorities and who feel threatened in their sovereignty. Nevertheless, these differences in trajectories are hardly insurmountable and hence do not preempt transnational cooperation, since common themes can be translated to respective domestic realities. The only noteworthy exception here is Germany: The role of the well-funded and organized Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Archives (BStU) is relevant with regards to the technical mimicry it has inspired across the mnemonic field, as well as in terms of its moderating role bridging 'Eastern' outcries with 'Western' concerns, but the reverberations of its activities in German domestic or foreign policy are of minimal import. As to the effects of memory institutes on the historiographic field, they are qualitatively similar across the region, whereas their intensity remains contingent on their relative financial superiority vis-à-vis strictly scholarly research institutes.

But regardless of domestic idiosyncrasies, memory institutes themselves have increasingly leaned on each other in an effort to increase their efficiency and perceive themselves as belonging to the same family of institutions. All are or have been at some point members of the Platform of European Memory and Conscience (henceforth, the Platform), the umbrella organization for memory institutes in the Eurocratic field that is at the forefront of attempts to disseminate communist-Nazi equalization at the EU level. To this common membership one must add the formatting of their relationships: crisscrossing bilateral and multilateral agreements unite memory

[5] Lithuania provides an interesting compound case between the Central and Eastern European and the Baltic models. Former communists have survived to a larger degree and leftist parties have been able to govern, whereas the Russian minority is considerably smaller. Nonetheless, similar concerns with regards to Russian threats to its sovereignty has encouraged Baltic co-operation in the mnemonic sphere.

institutes, suggesting a common enterprise. Thirdly, while a minority of cases do not neatly fit the memory institute model, they are invariably affected by a mutual links that advance institutional isomorphism or complementarity. For instance, some are primarily Museums – Museum of the Occupation of Latvia and the Public Foundation for the Research of Central and Eastern Europe / Hungarian Terror House –, but nevertheless engage in historical research and public education, and provide museological resources and expertise for exhibits organized by fellow memory institutes.

It should be clear by now that the case selection is not one of countries, but of an interweaved family of institutes that increasingly affects domestic memory politics, historiographic fields, and regional remembrance in similar ways. A closer observation of these institutes helps identify field dynamics that exhibit considerable consistency across national boundaries, potentially leading to what critics could consider generalizations. To allay such fears, I wish to emphasize individual cases are measured against ideal-typical categories that they variously approximate. The alternatives – to approach our subject from the perspective of a minimum common denominator or to provide extensive detail on a few national cases – would certainly impoverish our ability to provide insight into the transnational significance of memory institutes and, as I will argue, the mnemonic field they have given rise to. Nevertheless, the ensuing chapters will often draw attention to noteworthy national deviations and provide nuanced accounts that do not sacrifice the revelation of larger socio-historical processes on the altar of contingency.

## 5. Methods

I evaluate my cases by applying a field analysis conducted with data gathered through prosopography, in-depth interviews, and other documentary sources. I conducted a total of 38 interviews with three categories of individuals: 1) *memory entrepreneurs,* a term I develop more

fully in later chapters, designating individuals in leading positions in memory institutes and who engage in memory practices in several fields, such as political, historiographic, journalistic, museographic, and so on[6]; 2) Historiographic experts, including historians of historiography or other historians with a reported awareness of global historiographic debates who could place their local historiography fields into context[7]; 3) Other social scientists or experts from adjacent fields such as political science, museology, media studies and anthropology, mostly recruited through snow-ball sampling[8]. Except one interview that had to be conducted via Skype, all subjects were

[6] Memory entrepreneur interviewees: Andrei Muraru (former Executive President of the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile), Andreja Valič Zver (Director of the Study Centre for National Reconciliation), Bogdan Iacob (former Secretary of the Scientific Council at the Institute for the Investigation of the Crimes of Communism and the Memory of Romanian Exile), Hans Altendorf (Director of the Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the former GDR), Krzysztof Persak (Director of the Office of the President, Institute of National Remembrance in Poland), Leon Kieres (former President of the Institute of National Remembrance), Łukasz Michalski (Deputy Director of Public Education Office, Institute of National Remembrance), Mária Schmidt (Director of the House of Terror), Neela Winkelmann (Director of the Platform of European Memory and Conscience), Pavel Žáček (Former and First Director of the Czech Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regime), Paweł Machcewicz, Former President of the Bureau of Public Education, Institute of National Remembrance in Poland), Raluca Grosescu, Director of the public policies department of the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile, Ronaldas Račinskas (Executive director of the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania), Ruta Pazdere (Chairman of the Board, the Occupation of Latvia Research Society), Teresė Birutė Burauskaitė (General Director of the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania), Toomas Hiio (Member of the Board at the Estonian Institute of Historical Memory), Valters Nollendorfs (Chairman of the Board, Occupation Museum Association of Latvia)

[7] Historiographic expert interviewees: Darius Staliūnas (deputy director at the Lithuanian Institute of History), Ferenc Laczó, (Assistant Professor in History, Maastricht University), Florin Abraham, (Senior Researcher at the National Institute for the Study of Totalitarianism at the Romanian Academy), Ivars Ījabs, (Associate Professor, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Latvia), Karsten Brüggemann, (Professor, School of Humanities, Tallinn University), Maciej Górny (Professor, Scientific Assistant at the German Historical Institute in Warsaw), Marek Tamm, (Associate Professor, School of Humanities, Tallinn University), Matěj Spurný, (Senior Lecturer, Institute of Economic and Social History, Charles University in Prague), Michal Kopeček, (Director of the Imre Kertész Kolleg Jena), Michal Pullmann, (Director of the Institute of Economic and Social History, Charles University in Prague), Péter Apor, (Research Fellow, Pasts, Inc. Center for Historical Studies, Central European University).

[8] Other experts interviewed: Carlos Closa Montero (Research Professor, Instituto de Políticas y Bienes Públicos in Madrid, Spain; Author of EU Commission-sponsored report *Study on how the memory of crimes committed by totalitarian regimes in Europe is dealt with in the Member States*, Contract No JLS/2008/C4/006); Dominik Pick (Manager at Projects Department, European Network Remembrance and Solidarity); Dovid Katz (Editor of *defendighistory.com*; former Professor of Yiddish Language, Literature and Culture at Vilnius University, Lithuania); Irena Šumi (Senior Scientific Associate at the Institute of Multicultural and Jewish Studies); Justinas Dementavičius (Associate Professor at the Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius University); Kaja Širok (Director of the Museum of Contemporary History Slovenia); Matevž Tomšič (Professor at Faculty of Information Studies in Ljubljana, Slovenia); Rachel Kostanian, (former director of the Green House

met in person, in most cases in their offices (25), but several times, particularly in the case of scholars, also in cafes, restaurants (11) or their homes (1). This particular research leg took place in Berlin (Germany), Bucharest (Romania), Budapest (Hungary), Ljubljana (Slovenia), Paris (France), Prague (Czech Republic), Riga (Latvia), Tallinn (Estonia), Vilnius (Lithuania) and Warsaw (Poland), between November 2012 and May 2014. The interviews, taped with interviewees' consent, lasted a total of 50 hours, with the average one lasting 79 minutes. Generally, interviewees allotted abundant time to the interviews, which as a result were conducted in a relaxed and reflective atmosphere, while they were also available for any potential follow up questions. Interviews were semi-structured but occasionally turned into a conversation in which specific themes were explored in more depth. Memory entrepreneurs were asked about the sources of funding for memory institutes, the institutes' relationship to political parties, their reactions to and the consequences of governmental changes for their activities and impact, the evolution of their and their institute's international integration within both EU structures and towards each other, their impact maximization strategies and the role of their international networks in exchanging best practices and negative lessons, their experiences in EU settings, particularly with EC officials, their interactions with Holocaust education institutions, their professional and biographical trajectories and self-perception, their beliefs, mission and commitments, namely with regards to communism and Holocaust uniqueness, as well as the applicability of the totalitarian terminology in their work. Such questions helped establish the central themes of struggle within the political, historiographic, Eurocratic and mnemonic fields were memory institutes are invested and how transactions between them were absorbed and negotiated within their institutional and

Holocaust museum in Vilnius, Lithuania); Theodor Mittrup (Chairman of the Union of the Associations of the Victims of Communist Tyranny); Ulrich Mählert (Head of the Department of Science and International Cooperation, Federal Foundation for the Reappraisal of the SED Dictatorship)

informal mechanisms. Through this line of inquiry I was specifically able to ascertain their investment in building a transnational mnemonic field were memory institutes increasingly orient significant parts of their activity towards each other.

I explored related, but different themes with historiographic experts: The historiography of communism, its post-1989 evolution in themes, theories and methods, the divisions among historians in the historiographic scene and their corresponding social trajectories and professional networks, the position of memory institute historians in the historiographic field, the relations between memory institutes and traditional historical research institutions, as well as the internationalization of the field. Historiographic experts helped draw the social topography of the field by providing typologies of scholarly actors as well as the forms of social and cultural capital relevant to the historiographic field, and their impact on one's position within it. The interviews provided a coherent and consistent picture of commonalities and differences across national historiographic fields and of the impact of memory institutes on them. Once additional interviews no longer challenged the relatively consensual picture that was emerging, historiographic expert interviewees were no longer recruited. Finally, from the 3rd category of interviewees (experts from adjacent fields) questions were tailored to their area of expertise, but typically revolved around the perception of memory institutes and their historians in the field to which these experts belonged (Holocaust education, Eurocracy, Media, Politics, and so on).

I also deploy elite prosopography (Stone 1971) to reveal the biographies of the memory entrepreneurs who oversee the activities and orientations of memory institutes, as well as their field positions. My research looked for convergent patterns in the biographies of 16 memory entrepreneurs. Data was obtained by requesting or obtaining curriculum vitae, by consulting biographical webpages and via elite interviewing. The purpose of this research stage, with data

collected and analyzed between September 2014 and June 2015, was to reveal the social trajectories of memory entrepreneurs, that is, their education, formal and professional titles as well as institutional positions and connections. In other words, this research leg sought to measure memory entrepreneurs' accumulation of relevant forms of social and cultural capital, and from these attributes derive the fields in which they operate and their positions within and/or across them. Most commonly, memory entrepreneurs were characterized by a tendency to oscillate between fields, particularly by maintaining connections and cultivating networks across the scholarly and political fields, although they occupied a relatively – but not invariably - marginal position within them.

Several documentary sources were retrieved directly from 11 memory institutes, most prominently between November 2012 and May 2013, as well as from online sources[9]. I consulted brochures, scholarly publications, cooperation agreements (with other memory institutes, foundations and museums), mission statements, official declarations, organigrams, project agreements and descriptions of various museological, educational or media activities. I also obtained documentary sources from some of the international organizations supporting the activities of memory institutes, namely the Platform of European Memory and Conscience and the Reconciliation of European Histories MEP group. These included official declarations, cooperation agreements, mission statements, news and project descriptions. Lastly, another batch of documents was obtained from

[9] The following institutions were examined as broadly belonging to the memory institute category: The Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) in Poland; the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes (USTR) in the Czech Republic; the Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the former German Democratic Republic (BStU); the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia (LOM); the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania (LGGRTC); the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania (ICLi); The Public Foundation for the Research of Central and East European History and Society / House of Terror Museum (TH) in Hungary; the Nation's Memory Institute (UPN) in Slovakia; the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile (IICCMER); the Study Centre for National Reconciliation (SCNR) in Slovenia and the Estonian Institute of National Memory (EMI).

EU sources, most notably EU declarations on its historical legacy and cultural patrimony, transcripts of EP debates regarding the memory of the Holocaust, communism and totalitarianism, EP declarations produced at the end of such debates, EP conference proceedings and public hearing reports, as well as documentation pertaining to various rotating EU presidencies chaired by post-communist countries, particularly presidency programmes.

## 6. Chapter Structure

The dissertation chapters largely follow the storyline I have proposed above. It traces back the origins and activities of memory institutes in the political, historiographic and Eurocratic fields, and demonstrates that the routinization of these activities has allowed the emergence of an autonomous mnemonic field.

Chapter 1 reviews the current state of the literature on EU memory as the sole precedent of mnemonic regionalization and one that provided a blueprint for the subsequent engagements of post-communist elites with the Eurocratic field. The integration of Western European historical narratives followed a tortuous path: In the wake of World War II European nation-states were intent on instilling mutually exclusive regimes of remembrance that glorified national resistance against Nazism and concealed or minimized instances of collaboration with occupying powers, very much in line with post-communist developments. However, the project of European unification gradually invited a change in direction, mostly through subtle mechanisms and incentives. Firstly, and with a view on strengthening its legitimacy, the then-European Economic Community[10] (EEC) sought to deepen cultural integration, having already achieved a substantial degree of political and economic unification. To both safeguard and overcome nationalist

[10] The EEC preceded and was incorporated into the European Union, established in 1993

sensitivities, and partly spurred by the imperatives of the Cold War, the deepening of cultural integration took the form of constructing a European identity that decoupled politics from culture. This Habermasian formulation placed the values of a liberal-democratic political culture – democracy, the rule of law – at the core of this identity. Secondly, the European Commission (EC) endorsed a dialogue between scholars of European history. With a view on generating an interstitial space at the crossroads of Eurocracy and academia, the EU set up a few institutional arrangements, most prominently the European University Institute, the Liaison Committee of Historians, and the Jean Monnet Action, that could serve the purpose of diffusing European values through subtle incentives.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 would inject new energy into the promotion of a common European identity, and the EEC begins investing in engineering a regional regime of remembrance. By making emblematic Nazi sites and archives available, the collapse of state socialism in Eastern Europe revealed the larger regional significance of the Holocaust, and its potential as a negative founding formula for a common European remembrance. Germany provided the model to emulate, as its unique relationship to Nazism drove it towards adopting a politics of regret – most prominently for one's role in the Holocaust – as the primary mode of engagement with the past. An incipient regional regime of remembrance thus embraced the memory of the Holocaust as the ultimate manifestation of human evil, but did so by encouraging a parallel pluralization of remembrance rituals that could accommodate national memories. By this time, generational change in Western countries had produced receptivity to the deconstruction of national mythologies and to an introspective assessment of national responsibility for the Holocaust. With all the necessary conditions in place, the EU moved to assimilate politics of regret and diffuse it across its territory via a series of symbolic initiatives, declarations, grant programs and, crucially,

informal accession requirements. An Eastern European reluctance to face local collaboration with Nazi crimes, tied to the absence of an EU narrative on communism, would spark the first symbolic frictions with post-communist countries who ambitioned joining a Eurocratic field by then fully committed to politics of regret.

Chapter 2 begins to unpack the black box of collective memory in post-communist Europe by tracing back the region's endeavors to come to terms with the communist past. A spontaneous anti-communism typified the transitional period, helping unify the populace ahead of painful reforms, but also giving way to a delineation of positions between former liberal and conservative dissidents on how to tackle the legacy of communism. Liberal dissidents such as Michnik and Havel embraced a politics of regret that called on citizens to reflect on their role in the perpetuation of the communist system, whereas conservative dissidents pitted a small minority of treacherous communists against a victimized nation, in line with a simplified understanding of totalitarian theory. The anti-totalitarian framework would provide a better fit for the region's polarized politics. Partly, this was occasioned by its resonance with communist-era liberal and conservative dissidents thought, whereby the term was deployed to convey the stakes of their struggle to domestic and foreign audiences alike. While liberal dissidents abandoned their hitherto instrumental engagement with totalitarianism as soon as state socialism collapsed, conservative dissidents successfully re-associated its dualistic frames to the ensuing political battles of early transition, particularly those leading to the implementation of lustration.

A substantial group of politicians – termed mnemonic warriors – whose political agendas prioritize the struggle against the legacies of communism, would construct lustration not merely as a moral, but a national security issue as well. Recreating the prevailing associations of the anti-totalitarian framework, mnemonic warriors depicted a vulnerable democratic polity amenable to blackmail

and manipulation by a lingering and hidden communist clique. On the one hand, the success and persistence of this framing increased the value of the symbolic capital of anti-communism in the political field, but on the other, its confrontation with the recalcitrant blurriness of perpetrator-victim divisions, as revealed by lustration itself, precipitated its miscarriage. An awareness of growing socialist nostalgia, perceived by mnemonic warriors as 'untrue' to history and anti-democratic, compounded their feelings of failure.

Mnemonic warriors' attempts to resolve these contradictions leads post-communist memory politics into a qualitatively different stage, where memory is relocated and stored in state-sponsored memory institutes. Officially entrusted with establishing "the" official account of communism's "criminal" history, its mnemonic output is legitimated by the work of historians to whom political elites grant privileged access to key archival and testimonial sources. Capitalizing on EU membership, memory institutes allow mnemonic warriors to carry out incursions in the field of Eurocracy, providing an entry through which to amass new forms of symbolic (European) capital. These inroads, whereby mnemonic warriors attempt to connect their own politics of truth to the EU's regime of remembrance, lead to concessions to the anti-totalitarian framework. By emboldening memory institutes and sponsoring the networking of its scholars in EU bodies, post-communist elites successfully emulate previous EU efforts to promote a European history-writing. The existence within memory institutes of – considerably smaller – departments dealing with Holocaust history also permits them to respond to EU calls to come to terms with the Holocaust. At the same time, memory institutes articulate an injunction to remember that indicts the EU for its supposed failure to fully acknowledge communist crimes. Yet despite a few symbolic victories, funding patterns and official statements by EU officials reveal that the Eurocracy remains committed to politics of regret, revealing itself largely incompatible with post-communist politics

of truth. Whereas politics of regret promote decentralization and pluralization of memory as well as admission of national guilt, the anti-totalitarian framework encourages mnemonic centralization and externalization of guilt. Rather than a mere difference in mnemonic substance, I argue that it is this contrast between the political culture of the Eurocratic and the post-communist mnemonic fields that militates against the latter's harmonious absorption into the former.

Chapter 3 takes a deeper look at the post-communist political field and argues collective memory provides a foundation for a solidified political cleavage – the sustained division of voters into socially structured blocs. The cleavage literature has generally treated this cleavage as a mere regime divide – a division that, unlike cleavages, has only occasional political salience and lacks a solid social and organizational base. The regime divide would pit supporters and opponents of the defunct regime, and would be expressed mostly by occasional outbursts in debates regarding the fate of former communist officials. I posit that this estimation severely underestimates memory's significance, as all the dimensions traditionally associated to cleavages sustain this supposed divide: a basis in the social structure, a collective identity, an organizational manifestation and a critical juncture. To demonstrate this, I evoke field theory and combine it with the political articulation school to suggest we treat anti-communism as a highly recombinant identity that can easily become bundled with other ideological divides: nationalism vs cosmopolitanism in Hungary, religion vs secularism in Poland, titular nation vs ethnic Russians in the Baltics or premarket vs welfarist in the Czech Republic. Political entrepreneurs exploit anti-communism's malleability to entangle it with concurrent ideological divisions from which to ensure additional social bases of cleavage stabilization. The greater articulatory power of the post-communist right is grounded on the configuration of the political field's principal structuring axis. The possession of anti-communist symbolic power, one that bestows its owners with the power to

(de)legitimate ideological compromises and political alliances, determined the early contours of the political field.

While the work of articulation is essential to the regime divide's emergence, its translation into a long-standing cleavage requires mechanisms of social closure that mediate between the political field and voters. Memory institutes fulfill this role by overseeing the flows of electoral cues through their operation in several fields, particularly politics and academia. Specifically, they embed their practices in an anti-totalitarian language that facilitates the forging of cognitive links between Stalinism, late communism, and communist successor parties. They confer topicality to these practices by promoting the notion of a "communist threat" in the form of resilient and hidden communist-era networks. By combining a review of the literature on cleavage politics and fresh empirical data I show that more than a useful and occasional tool of political competition, memory is deeply embedded in the political cleavage structures of post-communist societies. Unlike Western cleavages that emerged almost organically from the structural divides generated by modernity, the memory cleavage that dominates post-communism hinges on political entrepreneurs' articulation and maintenance efforts.

These efforts at articulation have come to rely on scholarly knowledge as a source of scientific legitimation for the anti-totalitarian framework. Chapter 4 provides a field analysis of the region's historiography of communism and begins by grounding some of its principal points of division in the cold-war era debates over the suitability of the totalitarian model. I evoke Bourdieu's conceptualization of academic fields as structured by the relative possession of academic – controlling access to the academic corps – and scientific – publications, peer recognition – capital. I argue that besides these, a specific, historiographic fruition of competence capital, related to a willingness and ability to assist in an anti-communist national renewal, helps shape the field. The

latter is measured by the networks historians establish between political patronage, resources in the historiographic field and the larger public, and its importance is indicative of historiography's weak autonomy vis-à-vis politics. Although I highlight relevant differences between national historiographic fields, mostly based on distinct regime legacies, I argue that ultimately their commonalities allow us to sketch an archetypal outline of the field. Within it, a fracture emerges between two ideal-typical actors: scientific-oriented and therapeutic historians. Those who approximate the first type orient their actions strictly to the imperatives of the field: academic advancement through scientific, peer-reviewed work, openness to methodological innovations and engagement with transnational scholarly communities. Therapeutic historians will instead adopt a crudely positivistic, nation-centric approach, will be isolated from transnational scholarly communities, and will instead orient themselves towards the interstitial space between politics and history-writing. In a context of poorly-funded and centralized research institutions, a younger generation of scientific historians has faced hurdles in translating their scientific capital into rewarding academic positions. Instead, in recognition for their services towards anti-communist national awakening, therapeutic historians were often allowed to convert their symbolic capital into academic capital during the 1990s. This generational gap mirrors some of the sociological divides of cold-war era Soviet studies: Older, established historians view communism primarily through the lens of ideology, top-bottom power and criminal violence, whereas younger historians underline bottom-up dynamics of legitimation and mobilization, and the regimes' diverse incarnations in time and space.

While generally post-communist historiographic fields have moved towards de-politicization, the adoption of comprehensive standards of quality measurement and more transparent funding and employment opportunities, mnemonic warriors have slowed the field's autonomization by

intervening to correct previous "failures" of memory politics. The creation of memory institutes has engaged historiography in the assembling of an anti-totalitarian regime of remembrance, one bringing together therapeutic historians, political elites, archives and an anti-totalitarian discourse. Endowed with financial and organizational resources superior to those of traditional research institutions, the appearance of memory institutes leads to a partial reorientation of the historiographic field to the liminal space of public history, where academic freedom is constrained. This dislocation of resources, contested by scientific-oriented historians as a form of unfair competition, moreover implies a revalorization of competence capital that reaffirms the weakness of the historiographic field vis-à-vis politics.

The processes described in previous chapters culminate in the establishment of a regional regime of remembrance sustained on an emerging mnemonic field, the subject of chapter 5. During the field's various stages of development, memory entrepreneurs – actors endowed with a hybrid habitus and who use this hybridity to combine resources across fields – endeavor to maintain memory coherent across fields. Using the Reiterated Problem-Solving (RPS) approach, I show how these liminal actors, prompted by the failures of transitional justice in the early years of transition, engage in a series of problem-solving sequences that seek to counter a continuing "communist threat". I illustrate three principal sequences through the biographies and cross-field engagements of four memory entrepreneurs: Vladimir Tismaneanu, Janusz Kurtyka, Mária Schmidt and Neela Winkelmann. The first sequence (vertical interest alignment) sees scholars grant scientific legitimation to the narratives of political elites in exchange for greater visibility, easier access to archival sources and superior funding. A new modality of mnemonic intervention is thus born, one that consists of an ensemble linking mnemonic warriors, therapeutic historians, archival sources and an anti-totalitarian framework. The second sequence (horizontal interest

alignment) fosters the reproduction of the previous sequence across borders, most prominently through study visits, as well as the transnational transposition of successful memory practices. Germany's Stasi Records Agency and Poland's Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) serve as sources of inspiration, but also laboratories for positive and negative lessons.

Memory entrepreneurs transition to the third sequence with EU membership, which provides a novel source of symbolic and material resources from which to scale up to an autonomous field that shields them from domestic political contingency. Under this sequence, memory entrepreneurs must embrace a common identity, establish field-specific institutions and settle the rules of entry into the field. These tasks require a balancing act between the disparate interests prescribed by domestic political fields and the need to produce a cohesive message that EU policy-makers can accommodate. Capitalizing on a string of EU presidencies by post-communist governments sympathetic to their agenda, memory entrepreneurs participate in various networking events that achieve the above objectives: They instill an anti-totalitarian identity that pays lip service to Holocaust uniqueness, establish an EU-supported umbrella organization for memory institutes (the Platform), and use both to define the rules of membership in the field. With the latter in place, memory entrepreneurs can proceed to diffusing a coherent, anti-totalitarian memory across the continent by pooling resources from their regional partners. In terms of field theory, the mnemonic field provides an entry from which to theorize mechanisms of field emergence: Rather than witnessing a gradual growth in mutual interactions within a liminal space, autonomization is obtained by concatenating discreet interstitial spaces and scaling them up to a transnational level.

# CHAPTER 1: TWO MODELS OF REGIONAL REMEMBRANCE

Charles Maier (2002) famously distinguished between a hot Nazi memory and a cold communist memory as dominating a reunited Europe, noting that while the Holocaust remained a vivid memory commemorated throughout the continent, the crimes of communism had already been forgotten. Europe was built on a need to put the traumatic legacy of Nazism behind, gradually consolidating a collective memory narrative in which "the Holocaust was the culmination and proof of the ultimate decline of European civilization" (Judt 1994:2). A referential locus for any endeavor to "collectively remember," the notion of the uniqueness of the Holocaust has become inseparable from the process of European construction in general and that of European "collective memory" in particular (Aarelaid-Tart 2009; Banke 2009; Berger 2010; Calligaro 2013; Levy 2010; Rupnow 2009; Troebst 2010). EU states commemorate the Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27, marking the day Soviet troops liberated Auschwitz, and several countries have passed laws banning Holocaust denial. This narrative has been part and parcel of a global "politics of regret" (Olick 2007), a modern political culture that shifts public focus from glorification and patriotism to atonement and apology. By encouraging responsibility, justice and admission of national guilt (Golsan 2004; Immler 2012; Pakier and Stråth 2010) as principles of political legitimation, politics of regret has revamped the traditional mnemonic role of the state, gradually called upon to assume past wrongs and atrocities and mark these events accordingly. The state, but also civil society are thus encouraged to engage in official apologies, remembrance ceremonies and reparations as markers of a political culture that affirms itself by maintaining a 'hot' memory of Nazism.

Written at a time when political elites in post-communist countries were preparing to join the EU, Maier's assessment of the memory of Nazism remains prescient, but his observations on the memory of communism seem to have been hastily formulated. The long-ambitioned "return to Europe", (Kundera 1984) from which Soviet power allegedly kidnapped Central-Eastern Europe for half a century, finally came about in 2004. Candidate countries had adopted the basic tenets of the EU's political and economic principles with relative enthusiasm, but the informal requirement of adopting a Holocaust-centered mnemonic politics, hitherto halfheartedly heeded (Challand 2009:398), was soon reversed. The memory of communism began to heat up across the region in a manner that suggested a striking regional consensus: in 2009, a debate in the EP saw various Member of the EP (MEPs) from post-communist countries demand equal recognition for communist and Nazi crimes and their acknowledgement as equivalent variants of totalitarianism. The demands followed a string of conferences, declarations and commemorations sponsored by EU institutions such as the EC, the EP or the rotating Presidencies, where the language was consistently one of a need for Europe to allow an emerging region to convey its memory of the post-war after decades of coerced silence. These efforts resulted in the EP establishing a European Day of Remembrance for the victims of Stalinism and Nazism on August 23, in what was "an undisputable discursive shift towards an interpretation of Communism centered on its criminal nature and its structural proximity to Nazism" (Neumayer 2015:13).

Unsatisfied, Eastern European political elites, stepping up as seeming representatives of their region's collective memory, pushed further. In late 2010, the foreign ministers of the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, and Romania wrote a letter to the European Commissioner for Justice and Fundamental Rights, Viviane Reding, calling on her to institute an EU-wide ban on the denial of "crimes of totalitarianism" (Gwendolyn 2010). Explaining his

support for the measure, Czech Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg said they shared a "fundamental concern […] that totalitarian systems be measured by the same standard," adding that "Stalin managed to kill even more people" than Hitler. Lithuanian Foreign Minister Audronius Ažubalis called the letter a "wake-up call for Europe," explaining that "[e]veryone knows about the crimes of the Nazi regime, but only part of Europe is aware of the crimes of communism."

The last decade has therefore seen a second mnemonic narrative prospering on the European continent, a testament to the inescapable and increasing importance of transnational collective memories. The latest narrative invites parallels between the terror unleashed by Nazism and communism, ultimately questioning the uniqueness of the Holocaust by stressing the equally criminal features of communism. Post-communist elites justify these and similar initiatives as apposite 'corrections' to the regime of remembrance of the EU and its unfairly monolithic focus on the Holocaust, which Challand (2009:401) argues is symptomatic of Europe's privileging of a Western historical experience as a foundation of an all-European identity. Several other scholars (Kattago 2009; Leggewie 2010; Mälksoo 2009; Verovšek 2015) have similarly placed the declaration in the context of an organic and expectable process of voicing a hitherto repressed but now established collective memory of communism or, in other words, a turning moment for "post-EU accession ideological decolonization" (Mälksoo 2009:656). Another line of argumentation is that the heating of communist memory in Europe is part of a broader attempt to elicit a symbolic acknowledgement of Central and Eastern Europe's full membership status in the EU (Littoz-Monnet 2012:1193).

In contrast, or perhaps complementarily to the above, most observers of post-communist politics acknowledge at least an occasional political instrumentalization of the past (Enyedi 2005; Mark 2011; Nalepa 2010), but few have connected decommunization processes with the aforementioned

manifestations of regional mnemonic awakening. The social topography of post-communism reveals an acrimonious battle over the memory of communism, involving not just political elites, but also scholarly communities and the population at large. As one of the region's most prominent observers put it, Central and Eastern Europe is home to "too much memory, to many pasts on which people can draw, usually as a weapon against the past of someone else" (Judt 2002:172). With this in mind, there is good reason to marvel at the seemingly consensual message post-communist elites have articulated in regional arenas concerning communism. The fact that many of the MEPs responsible for pushing the establishment of a joint day of remembrance for the victims of communist and Nazi regimes were prominent former dissidents, and that their motions originated from representatives of conservative and right-liberal groupings (Neumayer 2015) suggests a connection between regional initiatives and the domestic memory politics of Central and Eastern Europe that has remained largely undertheorized.

Moreover, this stunning regional mnemonic convergence contrasts with the sluggish confluence of Western European narratives of World War II and the Holocaust, while also posing challenges to an incipient European model of remembrance that had been brewing for decades. The contrast is surely indicative of the enormous importance of memory for post-communist politics, yet as long as we fail to provide a satisfactory account of the links between its national and regional manifestations, memory, and particularly its transnational expressions, will continue to be misapprehended. For our purposes, it becomes imperative to reveal the components that make up these transnational memory regimes, and what the political entanglements between their national and regional memory politics are indicative of. In order to begin unpacking this puzzle we examine the only previous instance of mnemonic regionalization and the one that has received most scholarly attention. Developed by Western European states, this Holocaust-centered regime of

remembrance is not only essential to understanding the political culture brewing within the Eurocracy, it is also highly significant as a blueprint, an arena of struggle and a zone of opportunities and constrains for post-communist actors. In the first section, I provide a brief conceptual discussion that reflects the significance of memory as a transnational phenomenon. The second and third sections describe EEC efforts to build a common identity as a means of strengthening integration, particularly through the facilitation of scholarly exchanges at the intersection of the Eurocratic and scholarly fields. The fourth and fifth sections illustrate how the collapse of state socialism brought to the fore the greater significance of the Holocaust for this identity, and how the ready availability of a German model of "politics of regret" helped engineer a regional regime of remembrance. The sixth section elaborates on post-communist countries' rebuffing of the eastwards expansion of the Holocaust model.

## 1. Thinking of memory transnationally

A regime of remembrance is an attempt to 'freeze' collective memory into a series of official, institutionalized practices that stabilize the manner in which the polity provides opportunities for citizens to relate to a relevant body of interpretations of the past. We have distinguished two principal components within such regimes, their mnemonic substance and the mode of remembrance. The first concerns the historical interpretation being privileged by a hegemonic power arrangement, whereas the second reveals the political culture of remembrance, including the prescriptions and injunctions implied by its attendant identity.

The move from national to transnational regimes of remembrance, while a mostly European phenomenon, reflects in many ways collective memory's move from modernity to post-modernity, that is, from more centralized, institutionalized, mass rituals of remembrance to a more diversified landscape in which global and local processes traverse national regimes of remembrance. These

remain very much present and dominant, particularly in affecting the political dimensions of remembrance. However, powerful transnational narratives challenge their ability to control the process of collective memory, forcing them into pluralization (Conway 2008; Ryan 2011; Müller 2002; Rigney 2008; Rosoux and Van Ypersele 2012). The splintering pressures are often exerted from above: by international organizations, such as the EU or the Council of Europe, or by highly organized and qualified transnational epistemic communities, such as the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, mentioned at greater length below. Their influence is at times encouraged or tolerated by state actors, who may be less excited by concurrent sources of pressure from below, namely from civil society actors or victim groups who strive for individual naming and recognition rather than a strong identification with the national political community (Bickford and Sodaro 2010).

The scarcity of accounts that approach collective memory as a regional or transnational phenomenon reflects a resilient methodological nationalism that insists on the nation as the central reference point in both scholarly and lay endeavors into collective memory (Levy 2010:17). In fact, what many of these accounts miss is an acknowledgement that a transnational memory culture does not necessarily emerge to replace or erase national or local forms of remembrance, but instead to offer a new arena where these cultures find expression and interact (Sierp 2014). In this and the following chapter, we begin to distill how these convergent pressures have operated on two sides of the continent to produce distinct dynamics of remembrance. Since post-communist remembrance was partly a response to a Western precedent, and later flourished also within the frames set by Holocaust remembrance, this is the region where our inquiry into transnational memory politics must begin.

## 2. Western Europe: The EEC's Identity Politics

Traumatized by the brutality of the Second World War and Nazi crimes, Western Europe has ever since been called upon to come to terms with its past, becoming the region of collective memory par excellence. It was in Europe, site of various, at times ruthless forms of modernization that cut the continent's links to a now remote, rural and often idealized past, that memorial activity took unprecedented proportions, driven by a widespread hunger for the sense of historical continuity and social stability that commemorative rituals and celebrations can deliver. With the discrediting of state sponsored communist memory that ensued the collapse of state socialism in the Eastern half of the continent, seemingly only its Western half remained as a potential source of regional remembrance.

What is traditionally termed as the Western European region – the EU member states before 2004, plus Norway and Switzerland – had since the post-war era pursued a policy of political, economic and cultural integration that has belatedly produced a regional regime of remembrance, particularly in the post-Cold War period. This policy has been pushed above all by the EU as part of its efforts to integrate the continent into a single political community by promoting a "common symbolic repertoire" (Challand 2009:397). Karlsson (2010:38) suggests European integration is a threefold process that begins with economic integration, followed by thornier attempts at political unification that should then lead to a third, even trickier process of cultural Europeanization. This involved the establishment of a common identity, with potentially acrimonious implications in terms of linguistic, attitudinal and value divergence.

Memory has by now become a pivotal dimension of EU identity policies as well as "soft" membership criterion (Littoz-Monet 2012:1182). The institutionalization of a European memory played an initially small role in EU identity politics, but nevertheless European builders laid out

the first steps in the immediate years after the Second World War. The post-war period saw statesmen such as Robert Schuman in France and Konrad Adenauer in Germany promote the idea of a Europe that harked back at myths of European rationality and civilization and would subdue particularistic historical narratives and collective memories (Diner 2003:36-7). As early as 1950 the Schuman Declaration (EU 1950), a founding text of the EEC, presented European unification as the sole antidote to the possibility of renewed continental warfare; most subsequent treaties would also include references to the war (Calligaro 2013:105). While today scholars cite the Holocaust as the pivotal element in European remembrance, this is a recent development. Namely, from the beginnings of the European project until 1989 there was little mention of it in European initiatives, except in Germany where the role of perpetrator nation was internalized. Elsewhere in Western Europe, Anti-Nazism took overwhelming precedence over the Holocaust (Diner 2003:43). While the latter would implicate local collaboration with Nazi crimes, the former projected a heroic nation opposing a foreign invasion whose horrific crimes could be neatly externalized (Probst 2003:54), becoming all too tempting as a source of collective memory for political actors in the various nation-states.

With so many nations claiming unpolluted heroism, a consensual narrative was not readily available. To these difficulties one needs to add the intensification of the Cold War, which placed greater emphasis on ideological confrontation (Diner 2003:37) and contributed to postponing the dream of a European collective memory. The more pragmatic focus on values was made official in the Declaration of European Identity of 1973, in which the then nine member states stated their determination “to defend the principles of representative democracy, of the rule of law, of social justice" as "fundamental elements of the European Identity” (CVCE 1995:2). The date of this declaration, which has by now attained referential status, is not coincidental. During the 1970s EC

policy-makers perceived the economic crisis as potentially endangering European integration, which lead them to strengthen Eurocratic competences in the field of culture as a counter-measure. The declaration prompted the EP to engage in a series of debates on the need to strengthen the symbolic underpinnings of the EEC. The winning formula of European identity was a compromise between cultural diversity and unity in values, a uniqueness inherent in both the method of identity-construction and in the manner in which diversity is 'organized' via a separation between cultural and political identities (Bottici 2009:10). Inspired by Habermas' concept of a universal patriotism that decouples politics from culture (Brunner 1997:274), this identity constituted an attempt to go beyond definitions of the *demos* that equated it to *ethnos,* as such likening would have run counter to the goal of promoting cultural diversity, enshrined in various European treaties (Cerutti 2001:25-27). While this formula was found to be convincing among European leaders and came to define the logic of the cultural subfields of Eurocracy, it required translation into external fields from where it could be diffused and popularized. One of the solutions followed involved the generation of an interstitial space that would negotiate flows and exchanges between national academic fields and the Eurocratic field, where historiography also found a niche. It is to these interstitial practices that we now turn.

## 3. Scholarly Foundations of European Identity

The construction of a European identity was not confined to the boundaries of the political and involved active Eurocratic engagement with the scholarly community, as many believed in the role of universities as diffusion centers for 'pro-European' values (Shore 2000:49). The EC learned that setting up incentives for particular directions of research, for instance by rewarding sympathetic historians with (generally modest) grants, networking opportunities, and crucial visibility was the most effective means of attracting scholars into this liminal space at the crossroads of the EEC's

bureaucratic field and national academic spheres. Research orientations were never set too strictly, allowing for much critical engagement with the conceptual apparatus favored by EU officialdom and reducing perceptions of political encroachment on academia (Calligaro 2013:17).

Particularly from the late 1970s, the EC's approach combined the formulation of incentives for engaging with its own perspective of European history with the involvement of multiple stakeholders via institutional and informal mechanisms. While economics and law came to constitute relatively autonomous and pan-European fields of study quite early, history was only later recognized as a field meriting the same consideration and urgency for purposes of aiding European integration. Yet, there were several initiatives resulting from this recognition. The European University Institute, an institution created by the EU to instill a European consciousness and to serve the purpose of European integration, established a Department of History and Civilization that encouraged scholarly exchanges from across Western Europe (Calligaro 2013:39-40). Scientific conferences facilitating networking and exchange of ideas and practices would frequently obtain EU sponsorship. One of them resulted in the set-up of the Liaison Committee of Historians (*Groupe de Liaison des professeurs d'histoire contemporaine près la commission européenne*) in 1982, which helped establish the History of European Integration as a sub-discipline of history. The Jean Monnet Action, approved in 1990 and aimed at encouraging investigation and knowledge in the field of European studies, marked a reformulation of the Eurocratic field's engagement with the scholarly community: by establishing the Jean Monnet professors in history network, the EC sought to put more weight on teaching at the expense of research by mobilizing a wider array of historians and universities, and eventually stopped its funding of the Liaison Committee. In 1999 the commission reassigned the action from DG

Information to DG Education, a reflection of the EU's growing policy competences, and the program was endowed with more generous funding (Calligaro 2013:68-71).

EU identity politics were always implicitly advanced in these initiatives: history was to teach the need to uphold a specific set of 'European' values, but could allow room for these values to be 'realized' via distinct national trajectories. The Declaration on European Identity expresses this accommodating stance by arguing member states "might have been pushed towards disunity by their history and by selfishly defending misjudged interests," but have now "overcome their past enmities and have decided that unity is a basic European necessity to ensure the survival of the civilization which they have in common" (CVCE 1995:2). The EEC's openness towards diverse trajectories helped defuse some of the possible reluctance coming from member states, now invited to interpret their darkest hours as lessons that redirected their histories towards a reaffirmation of 'temporarily neglected' European values. Rather than pretending to be the ultimate arbiter of history, the EC presented its role in these initiatives as one of a moderator who brings a plurality of parties with contrasting historical experiences to the negotiating table.

These initiatives laid the foundations of a transnational scholarly dialogue that depicted the EEC as a peaceful and unifying project, yet their limits also created an awareness that a European collective memory could be more effective than history-writing as a means to diffuse a sense of common belonging. Indeed, by the new millennium the EEC fashioned decisive measures in the symbolic sphere, by now also aimed at what Antohi calls "a putative European memory (…) crafted in the offices of the EC by means of official *lieux de memoire*" (2007:XVI). What had been mostly restricted to uncoordinated yet converging national political rituals of regret became increasingly the object of an EU-guided attempt at institutionalizing and formalizing a transnational and official 'collective memory' through various days of commemoration, museums,

monuments, and initiatives to harmonize history textbooks and teaching (Berger 2010:128). Crucially, this period coincided with the implementation of the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, which brought several new areas of jurisdiction, including education and culture, into EEC jurisdiction (Shore 2000:3).

## 4. The Origins of a Common European Remembrance

In assembling a European memory, its architects needed to bring together the historical components as well as rally the alliances that could kick off a process of mnemonic regionalization. We have seen how prior to convergence, the Eurocracy engaged the scholarly community with the aim of generating convergent historical narratives from within a liminal space between historiography and Eurocracy. At the same time, however, developments in member states were providing further ammunition for the EEC to assemble a veritable arsenal of remembrance. Of particular importance for Europe was Germany's coming to terms with the past: The Holocaust would not only lend a powerful mnemonic substance, as a turning point from which Europe re-embraces civilization; it also signaled a particular mode of remembrance based on a politics of regret (Olick 2007). This mode of remembrance encouraged admission of national guilt as a principle of political legitimation, reflecting a double shift "in interpretation from heroism to collaboration" (Pakier and Stråth 2010:3) and in focus to a "memory of what 'we' did to others rather than what others did to 'us'" (Uhl 2010:82). It is this set of informal rules that the EC adopted and diffused across the member states of the supranational organization.

### a. The German Example

Western European nation-states unquestionably dominant role in memory production had already begun to be challenged in the 1970s, after a generational change had occurred and a growing number of voices assessed the Second World War from greater distance, expressing skepticism of

heroic and self-congratulatory national narratives. Previously, domestic political considerations had often called for the denial of the extent of popular collaboration with Nazi occupying forces, accompanied by a trend to glorify domestic resistance and exaggerate its extent. (Pakier and Stråth 2010:3; Simon 2011:432) But the greatest impetus for this shift towards introspection came from Germany, where the legacy of the Holocaust and the Second World War created an understandably favorable backdrop for the contestation of comforting national narratives. In the immediate post-war period that preceded this generational shift the picture was altogether different, but it was not one of a generalized amnesia. As Moeller notes, Germany was faced with the 'cognitive dissonance' caused by an overwhelmingly negative heritage of the Second World War and the need to produce a positive patriotic identity. Silence was only applied to the crimes of National Socialism, externalized as the consequence of Hitler's manipulation of the war in the name of the 'German people', whereas, in contrast, there was much of a commemorative culture around the suffering of millions of Germans killed or expelled in the aftermath of the conflict. While formulated without the vengeful undertones of the interwar period, the German memory regime firmly mirrored a national political reality in which the state had to address the pressing needs of millions of expellees and displaced people. Moreover, the global prerogatives of the Cold War had encouraged the forging of Pan-European anti-communist alliances at the expense of a thorny reckoning with a criminal past (Moeller 2005:158).

Yet, by the late 1950s and early 1960s, a new generation that accused their parents of complicity with Nazi Germany begins to relegate discourses of German victimhood to the realm of unacceptable false equations. The German state moved away from the policy of general amnesty and began to collect evidence for the prosecution of Nazi-era German officials, while their presence in the state administration came under scrutiny. This was a response to the rebirth of a

conservative movement with clear-cut neo-Nazi tendencies, which alarmed important sectors of German society and prompted renewed calls for reflection on popular responsibility for Nazi crimes (Moeller 2005:169). External events, such as the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Israel in 1961 or the airing of the U.S. television show "Holocaust" in the late 1970s, also contributed to hardening stances against any talk of ambivalence.

The last decisive gasp of a conservative reaction to a 'politics of regret' occurred in 1986 during the Historians' debate, a controversy among public intellectuals over how to approach Holocaust remembrance and Germany's role in the war. Revisionist scholars publicly urged viewing Nazi crimes in the context of modern genocides like the Soviet Gulag (LaCapra 1997:85), seeking to relieve the German population and soldiers from responsibility for the Nazi genocide (Brunner 1997:267). The conservative position was swiftly attacked by liberal intellectuals, led by Jürgen Habermas, who proposed a form of universal patriotism that dissociates culture from politics, a new identity founded on overcoming a horrible historical heritage – the Holocaust – but that provides post-war Germany with what Brunner sums up as "an enlightened democratic pride" (274-5). Habermas posited that the commitment to pluralism and democracy as a response to the tragedy of the Holocaust would underline the necessity of binding German fate with that of Western nations, and indeed Germany refocused its memorial activity towards the goal of collective identification with the West and Europe (Lupu 2003:130).

### b. 1989: The Beginning of European Repentance

While it would be intuitive to surmise that the fall of the Berlin War catapulted communism into Europe's arsenal of remembrance, its first effect was actually a regionalization of Germany's Holocaust-centered regime of remembrance. The opening up of Central and Eastern Europe to historians and the wider public made the European significance of the Holocaust even more

obvious to Germans and non-Germans alike. Of particular import was the declassification of Czech and Polish archives that included valuable information on both the German occupation and the mass expulsion of Germans from Eastern territories after the war. This allowed for a continuing pluralization of public memory in Germany – which by the 1980s already integrated the voices of other victims of Nazism, such as homosexuals or the Roma – but one that did not engage in relativizing Nazi crimes. In the evolving German regime of remembrance, the roles of victim and perpetrator did not stand in opposition to each other as they had in the past.

The year 1989 also provided a decisive impetus for the emulation of the pluralistic mode of remembrance championed by Germany. Only then did prominent Western European leaders, encouraged by the EEC, decisively and visibly embark in institutionalizing a new European "politics of regret". Germany's position "at the heart of transatlantic debates of retributive justice ever since World War I" turned the Central European country into a natural observation post for memory politics, going from a "proving ground of international justice" to "one of its principal subjects and champions" (Betts 2005:47, 78). The emulation of the German mode of remembrance also responded to the country's influential position in the European integration project: German allegiance to the European project was and is reflected in the attitudes of political, economic and cultural elites who shape both domestic and foreign policy, to the extent that the distinction between national and European becomes frequently meaningless (Frevert 2005).

While Germany provided the blueprint for transitioning towards a Holocaust-centered politics of regret, the principal diffusion mechanisms came from the Eurocracy as well as international organizations and initiatives. Convergence between national regimes involved not just agreeing on the substantive aspects of a common narrative, but also adopting a specific interpretative ethos of European history with far-reaching political consequences. Indeed, the Holocaust has moved on

to become "a universal cipher" instituting a set of global political-normative considerations in how to tackle past injustices (Levy 2010:18) and legitimating everything from 'humanitarian interventions' to Europe's politics of multiculturalism (Müller 2010:25). The EC sought to institutionalize the centrality of the Holocaust via the adoption of various symbolic initiatives that, although not binding, created additional pressure on member and applicant states to prove their commitment to democratic values. In 1993 the first explicitly Holocaust-related initiative took place, as a group of MEPs proposed granting former Nazi concentration camps the status of EU-level historical memorials. In 1995 the Directorate General for Education and Culture became responsible for the Raphael Programme, dealing with European heritage, which was incorporated into the Culture Framework Programme in 2000. The Program funds several projects centered around architectural heritage as the deposit of European memory, in line with similar legislation passed in Germany in the 1970s (Lupu 2003:130). By 2006 this budget was integrated in the vast European Citizenship program, whose Action 4, named Active European Remembrance, became dedicated to the preservation of sites and archives related to deportations and remembrance of victims. Worthy of mention as a part of the EU's efforts to engage directly with the public to create a sense of common heritage is a joint initiative with the Council of Europe called the European Heritage Days. Celebrated since 1999, it encourages European citizens to pay tribute to their common heritage across the continent (Calligaro 2015:337) through visits to 50,000 sites, including museums, galleries, historical archives, and libraries. The EP similarly underscored its continued commitment to this process with a resolution on remembrance of the Holocaust, anti-Semitism and racism passed on January 27, 2005, the date of the sixtieth anniversary of the Red Army's liberation of Auschwitz. In one of its most generously funded mnemonic enterprises, the EC launched the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure in 2010 (Littoz-Monnet 2012:1195)

to support networks of Holocaust researchers and the building of a digital infrastructure. The latest EU initiative came in May 2017 in the form of inaugurating a House of European History with the purpose of integrating particularistic narratives of the past into a European 'collective memory'. Noteworthy is also the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, created in 1998, to carry out worldwide research, education and remembrance on the Holocaust. An initiative of former Swedish Prime-Minister Göran Persson that was rapidly endorsed by Western leaders, such as Bill Clinton and Tony Blair, the Alliance has organized a series of forums on the subject of Holocaust remembrance and education involving several key EU heads of state. The Alliance now includes 31 member-states and eight observer states mostly from Europe, who have attempted to turn it into a cornerstone of European Identity, "a sort of redemptory model for transnational civic virtues" (Challand 2009:399).

Domestically, member states were generally accommodating. With anti-communist Cold War imperatives cast aside, national leaders in Western Europe could finally assume collective responsibility for past wrongs and organize public acts of apology or conciliation. While some public intellectuals opposed adopting the German model, interpreting it as an attempt to diffuse German guilt for Nazi rule, it came to be generally regarded as a healthy check on narrow-minded leaders that needed to overcome their own unquestioned national narratives (Berger 2010:128). During the 1990s the "politics of regret" started to diffuse continent-wide: Italy, France, Switzerland, Belgium, Denmark, Austria, Holland, and Sweden saw a variety of public debates that confronted publicly unacknowledged instances of collaboration with Nazi rule (Müller 2010:31). Several examples attest to this development. In Belgium, the increasing centrality of the Holocaust led local Flemish historiography to relinquish its minimization of Flemish collaboration with the Nazi regime (Rosoux 2011). In Austria, long self-depicted as Hitler's first victim, the

government leveraged the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Second Republic in 1995 to establish a fund for compensating victims of national socialism (Immler 2012). France used other means to achieve similar ends: Maurice Papon, a civil servant who led the police in major prefectures during the Vichy regime, was convicted in 1998 of crimes against humanity for the deportation of 1600 Jews to concentration camps (Golsan 2004). Even post-communist leaders have participated in this mnemonic shift, albeit mostly as abiding observers eager to comply with both formal and informal requirements for EU and NATO membership. As had been the case for Germany, confronting a country's historical responsibility for Nazi collaboration became a test of post-communist countries' commitment to a liberal-democratic political culture.

The expansion of "politics of regret" did not only fundamentally alter the relationship European countries had with Nazism, they also precipitated the pluralization and democratization of national mnemonic regimes, manifested in the integration of unrecognized memories that challenged or modified previously established narratives (Pakier and Stråth 2010; Ryan 2011). For instance, the Republic of Ireland saw increased acceptance of the memories of those who fought in the British army, integrating previously sidelined Unionist elements into a national narrative that had hitherto privileged the Irish independence struggle (Rigney 2008). Belgium has also recently endorsed the diversification of official memories along linguistic lines (Rosoux 2011), whereas Italian political leaders have since the 1990s opened discussions about the imperial past with former colonies (Henneberg and Clara 2004:72).

These initiatives should not be overemphasized: European states continue to be caught in their own self-centered national narratives, framing holidays, founding myths, commemorations, exhibitions or military victories in national terms. National regimes of remembrance remain anchored in a variety of historical myths dear to political elites rather than seeking the views of

those who constitute civil society and could speak for those below (Jarausch 2010:313). Yet collective memory processes cannot be understood from a purely static point of view, rather it is in the societal transmutations they induce that we reveal the principal underlying forces at play. As Simon observes, "over the last 30 years, many institutions of cultural memory have attempted to move away from a singular emphasis on affirming presentations of patriotism, triumph and great deeds toward a greater appreciation of the complexities, competing motivations and potential for aggression inherent in human relationships" (Simon 2011:432). Nation-centric narratives, while still dominant, are increasingly on the defensive.

## 5. A Perilous Road Eastwards

The wave of EU accession of 2004, by which Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia became member states, signifies a turning point in the process of growing acceptance of 'politics of regret'. In some countries more than others – particularly the Baltic states – a discomfort with Western calls to come to terms with the legacy of the Holocaust and its alleged insensitivity to the trauma of communism gradually sunk in, contributing to the most explicit and powerful reaction yet to the EU's regime of remembrance. While in most other arenas post-communist elites rarely questioned their commitment to catching up with policy goals set by the Eurocratic field, in terms of memory politics the EU was sailing into troubled waters.

The collapse of state socialism in Central and Eastern Europe had been immediately greeted by the theme of "a return to Europe", which conveyed a sense, prevailing among dissident circles and famously articulated by Czech-born writer Milan Kundera (1984) that, for half a century, the Soviet Union had kidnapped the region from its rightful European home. The theme did not emerge spontaneously from the events surrounding the fall of the Berlin wall but had instead been

cultivated as an alternative memory under communism in order to differentiate this territory from the former Soviet Union. If the former's fate was inextricably linked to the rest of the European continent, communism was yet another emanation of a backwards, threatening civilization (Neumann 2002:121-3), or an "Asian, barbaric force threatening European civilization" (Zhurzhenko 2007:6). The narrative of 'a return to Europe' was firmly established as an overpowering and consensual political imperative in post-communist countries, which proceeded to harmonize their political, legal and economic systems with those of Western European states. Western governments and Western-based international organizations such as the IMF, the World Bank and the EU offered a palette of political, financial and technical assistance offers that were made conditional on political parties' ability to push forth favored reforms, particularly economic ones (Wedel 1998). Not only did the theme of a "return to Europe" help rally support for the ultimate goal of accession to these organizations, it was also deployed by local elites as a source of "symbolic political power" in order to claim a right to membership of NATO and the EU (Neumann 2002:121). Having promoted collective memory as a lever for deepening political and economic integration among its member states, the EU similarly projected a set of implicit, memory-building demands onto Central and Eastern Europe as part of its accession requirements. During the first years of post-communism accession countries took the European call to come to terms with the Nazi past (Jarausch 2010:314; Rupnow 2009:69; Whitling 2010:83) as a chance to prove their liberal democratic maturity and compatibility with Western political culture.

But the adoption of EU's "politics of regret" was at best reluctant in the post-communist region. EU candidate countries proceeded to establish various Holocaust memorials and museums, but partly due to a lack of commitment by political elites, this did not lead to a public reevaluation of the role of pre-communist regimes in collaborating with Nazi rule. This was perhaps also a

symptom of a necessary stage of extrication, if one examines the European trajectory in memory politics. Following World War II, Western nations generally inaugurated their democratic orders by enshrining a collective memory of patriotism and resistance to external enemies, deemed entirely responsible for the war and most of its excesses. Western pressure to set the Holocaust-record straight, at a time that post-communist countries were busy constructing positive forms of national identification, were therefore unsurprisingly met with defensiveness and irritation in a region stained by interwar collaboration with Nazi forces. This was especially palpable in the freshly independent Baltic countries, where in 1940-41 the Soviet union had invoked said collaboration to justify their annexation. Geared at an outright condemnation of communism, observers worried these measures ran counter to a "politics of regret" as they implicitly sanitized "authoritarian regimes of the interwar and war period as ideals of nationalistic politics and milestones on the way to independence" (Rupnow 2009:70). U.S. Ambassador to Estonia, Joseph M. De Thomas was among the first to provoke irate local responses: Estonian officials accused him of interference in domestic affairs after he criticized the country's failure to include the Holocaust in its national history, as well as the country's unwillingness to bring anyone to justice for Holocaust-related crimes since 1991 (Wulf 2008:230). The Estonian government was also grudgingly compelled to remove a monument in the small locality of Lihula which depicted an Estonian soldier in German uniform. Foreign Minister Kristiina Ojuland explained the decision as unavoidable. Estonia was just "a small country that shares common European values and is building its future as a NATO and EU member", a country that needed to forego the memories of those who wore German uniforms that "the democratic world identifies with Nazism" (MFAE 2004). In the same vein, Latvian President Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga excused her country's role in the Holocaust as it had "ceased to exist at the time" and claimed Nazi German occupying powers bore

"the ultimate responsibility for the crimes they committed or instigated on Latvian soil" (MFAL 2004). Most significantly, she did so during the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, a landmark event for advancing Europe-wide "politics of regret".

Western demands to make amends for the role of Central and Eastern European countries in the Holocaust were problematic for conservative sectors insofar as they tainted the (re)emerging national mythologies produced by the demise of communism. But there was another simmering source of resentment against the West which saw it as having been complicit with communism and incapable of acknowledging the depth and extent of its associated trauma. In this popular perspective among the post-communist intelligentsia, Western Europeans ignore the magnitude of crimes committed under communist regimes when compared to their awareness of Nazi crimes (Laignel-Lavastine 2004:172, 175). The fact that none of the almost 300 specialized Eurobarometer surveys addresses European citizens' views of the past (Jarausch 2010:312) has contributed to the propagation of speculative assertions on Europe's supposedly low levels of awareness of "communist" or other crimes. However, as Rousso and Golsan (2004:5) point out, the *Black Book of Communism*, a compilation of national studies on crimes committed by communist regimes worldwide and edited by historian Stephane Courtois, sold 200,000 copies within the year of its publication in 1997, making it one of France's bestsellers.

The West, and particularly its left-wing spectrum, also stands accused of harboring illusions about, or even being complicit with the crimes of, communism. The argument, explicitly exposed in influential works such as the *Black Book of Communism*, is founded on two notions: one of complicity, which stresses communism's international character, the strong codes of discipline uniting communist parties worldwide and their adherence to the directives of Moscow, and the other one, a teleological, almost prophetic argument, which claims the various communist

movements were simply at different stages of development but would ultimately have resulted in the same "terror" had they been allowed to fulfill their goals. This argument suggests that if communists had ever stood up for democracy, it was with the ultimate intention of subverting and destroying it (Morgan 2010:266).

Such tout-court condemnation of communism would necessarily require a revision of national memories in countries as Italy, France, Spain, Portugal or Greece, where the ideology was never state-sponsored but played a formative role in struggles for democracy, anti-colonialism or the extension of social and economic rights. Their existence and their oppositional activities against authoritarian regimes precede those of any of the Communist parties in Central and Eastern Europe, with the possible exceptions of East Germany and Czechoslovakia (Morgan 2010:263). Communism is especially remembered as part of an international movement against fascism, namely with regards to the Spanish Civil War, a moment with a foundational significance for much of Europe. Post-war European history is just as relevant to Western Europe's different relation to the communist phenomenon: before the ideology's marginalization in post-1989 Europe, French and Italian communist parties were well-established in their respective democracies, had committed themselves to the democratic process, and enjoyed the support of up to a third of their national electorates throughout decades.

While the defensive, at times deflective, and often resentful stances taken by several prominent representatives of the post-communist elite were not representative of a broad consensus comparable to Western elites' endorsement of "politics of regret", all the ingredients for a troublesome mnemonic reunification were in place at the time of the EU's 2004 expansion: resentment against assumed Western ignorance of communist crimes, an Eastern European

reaching out to pre-communist myths tainted by complicity with the Holocaust, and a distinct Southern European memory of communism that couldn't be boiled down to its criminal features.

## 6. Conclusion

Having a clear direction, Western processes of collective memory have already been institutionalized into a regime of remembrance through initiatives such as granting Nazi concentration camps the status of EU-level historical memorials, adopting a resolution on remembrance of the Holocaust, anti-Semitism and racism, establishing the Active European Remembrance program and endorsing the activities of the Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. Its mnemonic substance is centered on the formula of the Holocaust, portrayed as the pinnacle of human evil, symbolizing the moment Europe lost its way and descended from civilization to barbarism. Any equations with other crimes are unwarranted under this regime, although there is space for including other aspects of the past in an effort to conduct a conciliatory dialogue.

"Politics of regret" inspires the EU's favored mode of remembrance, one that allowed Europe to deepen a pivotal dimension of cultural and symbolic integration without getting bogged down in nationalist historical resentment. The Holocaust was not only elevated to the condition of absolute evil, but member states need to ensure the political community engages in rituals of remembrance in which regret is expressed over complicity with it. At the same time, nation-states are also called upon to gradually accommodate previously unrecognized, peripheral voices, creating a complex, open-ended historical picture of which the EU seeks to be the moderator. A pluralization that the EU promotes as a means of splintering potentially threatening nationalist grievances. Ultimately, this creates a new form of "will to memory" (Eyal 2004) by which "the Holocaust is presented both as an event unlike any other, but also as the measure by which Europeans are called upon to

respond to other events that echo, but can never be the same as, the Holocaust itself" (Clarke 2014:103).

The EU followed two main paths to its institutionalization. On the one hand, it propagated the German regime of remembrance – with German assent - and subsequently sought to diffuse politics of regret across the continent. On the other hand, the sponsoring of a European scholarly field at the intersection of national academic fields and the field of Eurocracy helped diffuse ideals sympathetic to the EU's identity politics. These ideals affirmed democracy, the rule of law, freedom and progress as core values, but avoided upholding cultural homogenization, instead providing a framework for the articulation and reconciliation of a plurality of voices. In the field of historiography, the EC created incentives that provided broad orientations, but not an explicit narrative structure. The shift from history to memory was in a sense the result of a realization that a shared culture of remembrance was a more effective means of relating the idea of a common identity to the public, as well as of avoiding internecine conflict.

However, the EU currently finds itself at a crossroads. As it welcomed a post-communist region into its ranks, it also confronted it with implicit demands to account for its role in the Holocaust. But similar to Western Europe in the post-war period, the region was busy constructing a positive mnemonic identity founded on patriotism and resistance to external enemies. Hence, the temptation to grapple exclusively with the 'hotter' memory of communism was stronger than the desire to accommodate an informal Western requirement. Moreover, many of post-communist leaders went further, and counter-attacked by criticizing the EU's regime of remembrance for ignoring the Central and Eastern European historical experience. Holocaust uniqueness was for the first time openly challenged by member states, opening up a Pandora box by which nation-states could bring historical wrongs at the EU table for a continent-wide reckoning with the past.

The next chapter reveals how a coalition of post-communist mnemonic warriors went about to overhaul the EU's memory regime, wedding their initiatives to a struggle against a perceived "communist threat" in their own domestic turfs.

# CHAPTER 2: EUROPEANIZING POST-COMMUNIST MEMORY POLITICS

Following a terse encounter between post-communist politics and the Eurocracy, the EU's memory politics are at a crossroads. After decades constructing a regime of remembrance around the memory of the Holocaust, the EU is expected to accommodate the memory of communism while somehow continuing to promote its own *ethos* of remembrance in the countries where those demands originate. To begin gauging the roots and significance of this encounter, an understanding of post-communist memory politics is of essence. The first part of the chapter reviews the evolution of post-communist memory politics in the pre-EU accession period and explicates the varying success of several interpretative frames. Despite noteworthy differences in trajectories, it shows that somewhat comparable transitional justice measures – particularly in Central and Eastern Europe – and the overall lack of popular responsiveness to them engendered similar reactions from the post-communist right. The second part of the chapter takes a closer look at this increasingly hegemonic reaction and argues that what many scholars have seen as the liberation of the memory of communism in European arenas (Challand 2009; Kattago 2009; Leggewie 2010; Mälksoo 2009; Verovšek 2015) is fundamentally a scaling up of post-communist domestic political competition onto a new, transnational field. This is most obvious in the anti-totalitarian framework that dominates the Europeanization of the memory of communism, and that has been continuously reproduced from the times of communist-era dissidence. I conclude that the essence of the East-West clash in European remembrance (Verovšek 2015) lies in incompatible political cultures as manifested in their modes of remembrance.

## 1. Incipient Memory Politics

Memory politics made an early appearance in post-communist politics. During the first year of transition one's possession of anti-communist symbolic capital determined the principal structuring axis of an emerging political field. In this period of rather spontaneous anti-communism, any revision of nationhood that warranted legitimacy had to begin with an outright rejection of the communist past, hence the many political figures claiming to represent "an anti-communist national interest." (Verdery 1996:90). All over the region, these incipient politics of rejection of the past had many purposes. Firstly, they were effective in ousting the various communist parties from power in the first elections and enabling an irreversible process of transition to capitalism. Secondly, they played a key role in the building of political identities that legitimated the position of emergent elites and helped maintain a degree of societal cohesion and normative orientation ahead of painful market reforms. Thirdly, this period delineated the range of acceptable political stances towards remembrance of the communist past. The debate generally divided liberal dissidents who, inspired by Western "politics of regret", believed in extensive popular responsibility for sustaining communism, and conservative dissidents who dismissed communism as an external imposition.

Nonetheless, over a decade after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the politics of memory of East-Central Europe remained exceptionally intense: Müller (2002:9) observed "a desperate need for founding myths" with historians "busy with excavating national pasts" and "imagining traditions", with the result that "memory increasingly pervades the media, political debate and everyday discourse" (Müller 2002:13). As post-communist polities continue to struggle with democratic consolidation, the rejection of communism has persisted as a means of "emphasizing that which distinguishes us from the past" in order "to consolidate today's fragile and probably quite

superficial democratic identity" (Kopeček and Spurný 2014). The centrality of memory to political competition encouraged the emergence of what Bernhard and Kubik (2014) designate as "fractured mnemonic fields", conveying a continuing polarization in attitudes towards the past amid political elites and the public at large.

The continuing relevance of memory politics is indicative of widely shared perception of failure to come to terms with the heritage of the past. In the next section, I begin to explore how competing approaches to the past faced off to shape post-communist politics in ways that elicit persistence.

## 2. Anti-Totalitarianism vs Politics of Regret

The totalitarian framework, most notably developed by scholars such as Hannah Arendt and later refined by Zbigniew Brzezinski, has undoubtedly provided much of the intellectual toolkit for post-communist narratives of the past. Dominant at the height of the cold-war, the theory of totalitarianism sought to explain the functioning of the Soviet state apparatus based on an ideologically-grounded effort at institutionalizing terror. By the 1970s the theory had been put on the defensive by a younger generation of social historians who, having spent time in the region, were keen to underline the many bottom-up, evolutionary and unconstrained dynamics of various spheres of Soviet social life (Engerman 2009; Fitzpatrick 2007). However, the events of 1989 revitalized the theory, which in the Central and Eastern European context gradually coalesced into a simplified theory of "usable totalitarianism" (Kopeček 2013) or anti-totalitarianism (Clarke 2014). This framework was fundamentally deployed to revitalize wounded national identities and to serve as an "overarching symbol" that stood as the opposite of an idealized "democracy" (Holy 1996:108). As the old regime collapsed in discredit, anti-totalitarian narratives brought psychological comfort to the masses by treating communism as an alien historical imposition, one pitting a small group of externally backed communists against a patriotic but helpless population.

The depiction of local populations as unequivocal victims in the Soviet terror process (Karlsson 2010:42) was moreover coupled with their exoneration for wartime complicity with Nazi forces (Karge 2010:138).

In his assessment of regional museums dealing with the history of communism, Apor poignantly describes the ubiquity of this reading: "The intention is not simply to demonstrate the brutality and barbarity of communist rule in these countries, but rather to represent these regimes as if they had been founded and maintained exclusively by force and profound systems of coercion. The rule of the communist parties thus appears alien to these societies, a result of outside or foreign forces for which the respective nations bear no responsibility … Instead of providing historical explanations for the origins of the communist dictatorships, these exhibitions seek to moralize more generally about the significance of human suffering." (2010:236)

The anti-totalitarian framework found considerable continuity with the various strains of anti-communist dissidence that emerged beginning in the 1970s. For both liberal and conservative dissidents, labelling communist regimes as "totalitarian" helped draw a clear line between the regime and the opposition to mobilize the population. There was little agreement beyond this pragmatic compromise, with liberals advocating human rights and civic patriotism and conservatives underscoring nationalism and "national memory" as repertoires of resistance (Kopeček 2012:590). Persuaded that totalitarianism offered an inaccurate portrayal of everyday life under communism – despite its political utility – most liberal dissidents came to modify the notion to convey the supposed totalitarian ambitions, rather than power, of communist elites (Brier 2011:204).

Yet the intricacies of liberal dissident thought failed to mobilize the domestic opposition as effectively as the dichotomizing narratives of conservative dissidents, who inspired the post-communist rise of uncompromising "mnemonic warriors". Defined by Bernhard and Kubik as actors who "drive a sharp line between themselves" and competitors in terms of their ability to provide truthful accounts of the past, mnemonic warriors believe such accounts can or should "become the foundation of social and political life" (2014:17). Many are historians, public intellectuals and pundits, but the term will henceforth denote their prominent political representatives. Hungarian Prime-Minister Viktor Orbán, former Estonian President Lennart Meri, former Polish Prime-Minister Jarosław Kaczyński, former Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis, or former Romanian President Traian Băsescu are among those who have encouraged citizens to perceive themselves as belonging to the clear and often mutually exclusive categories of "perpetrators," "collaborators," "victims," or "dissidents."

Those who lived under communism knew they had been "on both sides at different times … making people complicit, especially through an, even if only symbolic, acceptance of the official ideology" (Kiss 2009:121-2). Judt similarly noted that "[n]o matter how many times people proclaim that 'they' did it to 'us', the fact is that very few people could or did object to communist power," leading to a collective shame inspired not by "any real or imagined crimes," but rather by people's "daily lies and infinite tiny compromises" (Judt 2002:174). The realization that the regime "eventually was so weak" magnified this shame, leading many to argue "that they had never believed in the system, and that they had always resisted the rule of the communist elite" (Rév 1994:168). The anti-totalitarian framework's appeal therefore lay in its capacity to deflect conflictive feelings and relocate the problematics of the past onto an external other or others (the totalitarian state, its leaders and/or its foreign sponsors).

Liberal dissidents who had once engaged with the concept of totalitarianism now watched in horror the growing gap between people's lived experiences of socialism and the "totalitarian" interpretation, instead advocating the sort of soul-searching repentance implicit in the EU's politics of regret: Michnik argued that in his native Poland the "now widely held view that communism was nothing but the work of Soviet agents makes it impossible to understand the paths that people took to communism, the attractions of Communist ideology, and the experiences that led people to break with it" (Michnik 1993). In a dialogue with Michnik himself, the Czechoslovak dissident-turned-President Václav Havel provided a similar account: "We are all in this together – those who directly, to a greater or lesser degree, created this regime, those who accepted it in silence, and also all of us who subconsciously became accustomed to it" (Michnik and Havel 1993:21). Havel provided an exception among liberal dissidents in that he was able and willing to remain in politics until 2003, when his second term as Czech president came to an end. Yet in his own country the liberal dissidents' formidable fall from grace was excruciatingly palpable: After successfully beating the communists in the first democratic election in a broad dissident coalition, subsequent policy divisions forced new elections in which the liberal dissident formation, the Civic Movement, failed to pass the 5 percent threshold necessary to get into parliament. Elsewhere too, the binary categories and nationalist exaltation that characterized the anti-totalitarian narrative found greater continuity in the post-communist politics of the past. This was clearly manifested in the discursive framing of otherwise expectable transitional justice measures that, as I will show, engendered frames that powerfully shaped the subsequent evolution of post-communist politics.

## 3. Securing Democracy

During the first few years of transition, Central and Eastern European countries experimented with numerous transitional justice measures such as restitution, lustration, and official declarations

condemning the past or forbidding the denial of communist crimes (Klumbyté 2010:296; Leggewie 2010:4). For instance, in 1993 the newly independent Czech parliament adopted a law declaring the past communist regime "criminal, illegitimate and abhorrent", blaming the leadership and members of Czechoslovakia's communist party for the destruction of traditional values, the country's economy and its European civilization (Kiss 2009:129). These steps acted "symbolically on society, sending a clear message of condemnation, drawing a sharp line between the past and the present" (Eyal 2004:24). At the same time, political elites justified similar measures in terms of securing the smooth functioning of young democratic institutions, or even as a national security imperative.

Transitional justice measures rarely achieved their declared target and instead opened a veritable can of worms. The restitution of property seized by the communist regimes frequently implied abundant compensation for descendants of long-departed émigrés, whereas those who remained behind were left with the feeling that, just as in the past, they were still getting nothing (Judt 2002:176). Trials posed several problems, as the selection of the accused was arbitrary and politically biased, to which one could add the conundrum posed by prosecuting individuals for actions not considered criminal under communist laws. Latin-American style truth commissions, where the past is reckoned with through both knowledge and acknowledgement, failed to materialize, with partial exceptions made for specific historical events: national commissions of inquiry addressed the 1981 Martial Law in Poland, as well as the Soviet invasions that thwarted the reformist movements of the Prague Spring in 1968 or of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. These investigations mostly provided an opportunity to assert Soviet Union responsibility for historical wrongs at the expense of reflecting "on the personal responsibility which each and every one had for sustaining the communist regime" (Ash 2002:272-7).

The most pervasive approach to transitional justice was lustration, defined as the process of excluding communist-era officials and collaborators from leading public-sector posts. Harsher versions, epitomized by the Czechoslovak bill, stipulated the perennial exclusion from senior state posts of former Communist Party leaders, secret police officers, their collaborators and other "wrongdoers", privileging a message of trust in government over reconciliation. At the other end of the spectrum mild lustration laws, such as the Hungarian, put greater emphasis on social reconciliation. The point in this variant was to transparently reform the state apparatus by potentially allowing the reintegration of former communist officials. Tainted officials were confronted with their past record behind closed doors and faced the option of either resigning or dealing with the consequences of public revelation of their past (Choi and David 2012).

While initially justified in terms of a societal need to cope with past acts of collaboration and injustice (Appel 2005:380) lustration soon fell prey to the dualistic categories of anti-totalitarianism and was framed as a sensitive national security issue. The putative presence of “communists” with low patriotic credentials working in the state apparatus fed fears of resurgent communist-era networks pulling the strings of politics. Moreover, the fight to "cleanse" the political field proved early on to be a profitable theme to deflect attention from the economic difficulties of the early 1990s. The two tendencies became clearly entangled in Hungary at the beginning of 1990. Having already implemented most basic democratic reforms, opposition politicians claimed former communists were destroying secret service files as well as spying on former oppositionists. As the economic situation deteriorated throughout the early 1990s, government officials claimed communist networks were sabotaging reforms from within the public administration (Williams *et al*. 2005:29-30). Similarly, in Poland the Olszewski government

approved a lustration bill just as a new strike movement was beginning to form in the summer of 1992 in the wake of economic adversity (Ost 1993:478-479).

In Czechoslovakia, home to one of the harshest formulations of lustration, the topic of securing democracy took extraordinary proportions. A diverse coalition formulated the first lustration attempt united in the belief that the new democratic regime remained fragile and vulnerable to subversion, despite being based on unsubstantiated reports (Williams 2003:2). Following the transition, media reports claimed the Czechoslovak secret services (StB), the local Communist Party and the KGB had orchestrated the anti-regime protests of 1989 in order to install a reformist communist regime. Revelations that StB agents had infiltrated the dissident movement was enough for many to endorse this theory, causing many to fear former communists had been trying to ensure themselves an afterlife in the emerging elite. While the evidence for this conspiracy was eventually found to be largely fraudulent, the notion that the StB orchestrated the revolution and pulled the levers of power in the country became popular. A second theory that received extensive press coverage claimed a residual StB possessed "kompromat" that could be used to blackmail the new elite into anti-democratic behavior. Again, there was no evidence for these claims. Finally, in the southern neighbor of Slovakia a liberal faction accused former StB agents of spurring nationalist and secessionist sentiments, also without offering supporting evidence (Williams 2003:3-5).

Lustration eventually became “an element in political competition against the Communist successor parties, … a means of carving out distinct identities and pursuing leverage *within* the post-opposition camp, against other post-oppositionists who were more ‘communist forgiving’” (Williams *et al.* 2005:31). The perception that the same network of communists appropriated state assets through the privatization process, converting political capital into economic capital and then back into political capital, helped aggravate hostility towards socialist parties (Zarycki 2000:860).

While the narrative had widespread currency throughout the region, the communist-era low-level managers who actually won out with transition were to be found across the political spectrum and had been invisible and relatively apolitical under state socialism. Yet on account of their professional expertise, these managers monopolized the power to make investment decisions that were crucial to redefining the post-communist economic landscape. For reasons of political expediency and symbolic legitimacy, managers turned to a variety of ideologies that could be diametrically opposed to socialism (Eyal, Szelenyi and Townsley 1997). Partly due to the mismatch between the actual power configuration of post-communism, and the political discourses that constructed a thick line between powerful former communists on the left and democratic opposition on the right, anti-Communist rhetoric was consistently ahead of concrete decommunization measures. Even in the Czech Republic, where political elites adopted a seemingly categorical stance on lustration, the law fell short of the expectations of substantial anti-communist constituencies. Tellingly, while Czech lustration laws barred high-ranking former communist officials from appointed positions in the state administration, it crucially made no provisions for elected positions, while leaving lower-ranking party members untouched. A harsher lustration law would have hit high-ranking conservative politicians who either took, or were to take important posts in Czechoslovak and Czech governing structures, such as Finance Minister Ivo Kočárník, minister responsible for privatization Tomáš Ježek, or economic expert to the National Economic Council of the Government Vladimír Dlouhý (Hanley 2007:106-8).

These dubious political trajectories and blurry division explain the ambiguous, context-based and, for many, unsatisfactory implementation of lustration. The anti-totalitarian illusion of widespread popular rejection of communism was contradicted by the reality of collaboration, pervasive in countries such as East Germany or Romania, but significant in any communist society. Parties in

the conservative camp, and many liberals as well, faced a double bind that consisted in constructing the image of a clear boundary between collaborators and righteous patriots, while attempting to conceal the recalcitrant blurriness of these social categories. Yet amassing the necessary support for the implementation of lustration required striking the right alliances and making painful compromises that put this boundary work into question. A predicament that was bound to damage all political camps at the end of the day.

Despite being the main target of lustration, public pressure compelled the region's left to enable the law's passage via abstentions and absences (Williams *et al*. 2005:37, 39). In theory, the left had weapons to fight back. Communist-era files where often tampered with or damaged, making them unreliable and hence casting legitimate doubt on the veracity of accusations of collaboration or involvement with the regime. There was widespread condemnation from international organizations as well: The International Labor Organization, the Council of Europe, the EU and the US Department of State criticized some of these laws for their overly retributive nature and for being in breach of democratic principles (David 2004:790). Yet for the left a clear opposition would have been toxic, since the public could perceive it as an implicit admission of guilt from a political force claiming to have renewed itself.

The former dissident opposition, on the other hand, had reasons to restrain lustration's scope: the communist-era secret police had frequently infiltrated dissident organizations, and anti-communist parties feared outing their own "skeletons in the closet" (Nalepa 2010). The first Hungarian Prime-Minister of post-communism, the conservative József Antall, opposed a proposed lustration law in part out fear that members of his party were tainted by collaboration, but also to keep the option of politically motivated accusations of collaboration available (Williams *et al*. 2005:36). In the most blatant demonstration of this danger, the publication of a book in 2008 purported to show

former dissident and former Polish President Lech Wałęsa had been a secret police collaborator while working at the Gdansk Shipyard, birthplace of the anti-communist Solidarity trade union movement. While Wałęsa persistently denied the authenticity of the documents, these conveyed the image of a man who, absent threats or blackmail, spied on his coworkers and tipped leading officers to planned anti-regime demonstrations (Nalepa 2010:230-1). Wałęsa's case emerged precisely in the context of the only lustration law that was pursued in an uncompromising fashion, with its proponents encouraged by a belief in their own imperviousness to the law. The law's initiator, the nationalist-conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party, had been marginalized during the round-table negotiations that set the terms of the transition from communism. Its ranks were also much younger and hence less likely to be compromised than those of other prominent post-dissident parties. The *de facto* leaders of PiS, the twin brothers Jarosław and Lech Kaczyński, were certain that no former secret police collaborators were among their top ranks, particularly since Lech had held top state positions that gave him privileged access to secret files of the entire political elite (Nalepa 2010:17-9). Hence, while they were free to propose a harsh lustration process that "corrected" for Poland's milder approach a decade earlier, this sort of political opportunity structure was rather unprecedented in a region where former communists and collaborators populated the entire political spectrum.

While most political actors ultimately felt unsatisfied with lustration's outcome, they were also able to convey an explanation that justified the righteousness of their initial stance towards it. Liberals were divided. They tended to see therapeutic value in maintaining a collective memory of socialism in the public sphere, but many had raised concerns that separating perpetrators from victims in societies plagued by ubiquitous collaboration was hardly a constructive attitude. Some of the most notorious liberal dissidents such as Michnik or Havel even condemned what they saw

as lustration's degeneration into an anti-communist witch-hunt (Laber 1992). Nevertheless, liberals generally played along, fearing any objections would "cast them into the thankless role as defender of communism" (Ost 1993:472), while retaining a certain I-told-you-so flair with regards to the blurry lines revealed by its implementation.

Conservative dissidents were eventually forced to recognize they had overestimated lustration's shaming power over public opinion. This became painfully clear in Hungary, when in 1997 socialist Prime-Minister Gyula Horn brushed off calls for his resignation following compromising revelations. Documents proved that Horn had received secret police reports as a former communist official, and that he had been a member of a counter-insurgency squad that collaborated with the Soviet-led invasion of Hungary in 1956. Yet accusations did not resonate with a majority of the public, and he completed his 4-year mandate in 1998. Moreover, in the context of painful economic reforms, initially high citizen support for lustration fell as perceptions of its political instrumentalization grew (Williams *et al*. 2005:33). But for mnemonic warriors these setbacks were hardly evidence of a mismatch between their ideals and reality. Instead, they confirmed the deficiency of transitional justice measures, poorly implemented in both breadth and scope, largely as a result of the resilience of a powerful "communist" clique that had sabotaged its implementation. While broad sectors of the political elite welcomed the mid-1990s rise of socialist successor parties as a sign of political normalization, their mounting presence in government only fueled mnemonic warriors' perception of a looming communist threat, one of which citizens seemed dangerously unaware.

## 4. The Nostalgia Phenomenon

For mnemonic warriors, popular fatigue with the theme of a communist threat signaled a weak popular commitment to the new democratic order. A budding nostalgia for the communist past

(Velikonja 2009, Marin 2016:20) compounded these concerns. In an address to a parliamentary session dedicated to officially condemning communism, Romanian President Traian Băsescu articulated these concerns by tying the condemnation of the past to a commitment to the new political order: "There are also many people, who are overwhelmed by the hardships of the present and who seem to have lost the belief in the virtues of our democracy. They begin looking nostalgically to a past which starts to appear bright in the context of the hard moments of the prolonged transition. I am telling them that it is worthy to reactivate their memory. They should remember the cold, the hunger, the darkness and the humiliation that characterized our lives…" (cf Hogea 2010:27)

Shunned from officialdom, nostalgia was to be found in the more popular and cultural expressions to which it had been relegated. Ostalgia's "revival of late socialist pop-culture kitsch", visible in everything from restaurants, museums, music, design and advertisement, is one of the many signs of a growing melancholy for life under socialism (Kopeček 2008:84; Duvold and Ekman 2016:46). Its significance has been subjected to a passionate public debate, whereby its expressions are generally ridiculed and stigmatized (Klumbyté, p. 296 2010) and its exponents termed as backwards, unreceptive to economic reforms, unaware of communist crimes and untrue to history (Marin 2016:11; Asavei 2016:27).

Yet nostalgia appears more complex than its elite portrayals make it to be. A series of studies conducted in Romania, home to one of the harshest expressions of communism in Europe, are illustrative of the contradictory feelings aroused by the past. In 2006, 41 percent of Romanians considered communism a good idea that had been badly implemented and by 2010 this number had risen to 68 percent. That year, surveys showed that positive assessments of communism trumped negative ones (46 percent to 36 percent) and that half of the population believed Romania

was better off before against 23 percent who felt life had improved. While confirming the growing significance of Nostalgia, those same surveys showed that an overwhelming majority of Romanians supported the regime change in 1989 and would oppose pre-1989 anti-democratic policies (Marin 2016:19-20). Other surveys have similarly shown that nostalgia's practitioners generally do not desire a return to socialism (Velikonja 2009).

Scholars of communist nostalgia have claimed that such results expose nostalgia as a phenomenon that refers to the present, and a dissatisfaction with it, as much as to the past. For instance, Kopeček claims the phenomenon serves as a form of resistance to "the absolute truths of political and ideological programs" (2008:81) that became prominent in the region. Others have noted nostalgia's multidimensionality. Ekman and Linde's (2005) typology of nostalgia divides it into (1) political-ideological, when it is genuinely linked to non-democratic attitudes, as mnemonic warriors claim; (2) performance-driven, by which nostalgia is a response to downward socio-economic mobility occasioned by the transition and; (3) biographical, whereby nostalgia conveys positive personal recollections of the period, such as marriage or a successful professional career. Duvold and Ekman (2016) add a fourth dimension, nationality-driven, where nostalgics view in the old regime as a source of national pride and international recognition, as is the case of Russian speakers in the Baltic countries.

These multifaceted expressions of social remembrance underscore the absence of an inescapable clash between communist nostalgia and commitment to democracy. However, they do indicate a blatant mismatch between elite and grassroots memory practices that the left has failed to coalesce into an alternative regime of remembrance. Partly, this is due to their exclusion from public discussions of the past in the early 1990s, when it seemed like the electorate unconditionally and irreversibly had leaned towards parties declaring themselves right-wing (Kopeček and Pseja

2008:318). In the context of a dominant anti-totalitarian interpretation of communism, liberal dissidents were the only ones who put forth a consistent reading of socialism that happened to align with Western politics of regret[11]. Communist successor parties only occasionally divulged their views on the past, combining a positive reading of some aspects of the defunct regime with a politically mandatory *mea culpa* that could align itself with Western politics of regret. The post-communist left certainly condemned the excesses, crimes and planning mistakes of the communist era when prompted, however they tended to note what they regarded as some of socialism's positive effects: the industrialization of a previously agrarian economy, the education provided to previously illiterate workers and peasants, the increase in living standards of the most vulnerable classes and/or the construction of a modern state (Zarycki 2007:487-8). But ultimately their own legitimacy as post-communists relied on the assertion that communism had been utterly defeated, and that the new system was unquestionably democratic. When credible, as in Poland and Hungary where negotiations preceded the systemic change, they emphasized their own role in bringing down the regime. By opening negotiations, by inviting the opposition to discussions on the new political order, or even by invoking their earlier struggles as reform communists against Soviet orthodoxy (Mark 2010:3)[12], socialists attempted to display progressive, forward looking credentials that contrasted with the right's commitment to an "irrelevant" struggle over the past.

However, the ambiguous and nuanced readings of the communist past proposed by the former communists, as well as their sporadic "tainting" of national traditions by pointing to local

[11] I must however note that Slovenia is partly an exception in this case, since the anti-totalitarian framework clashes with the relatively benevolent view of Tito's Yugoslavia among much of the population and the elites.

[12] As Mark notes (2010:18-19), the Hungarian socialists sought to align themselves with the communist reformers who capitulated to Russian tanks after the 1956 revolution and who then, in the face of such brutal suppression, attempted to peacefully fulfill the goals of the revolution under a reformist leadership in the ensuing decades. Particularly since the 1960s, Hungary came to be known for its relatively liberal tendencies.

connivance with Nazi crimes, were ultimately susceptible to attacks from mnemonic warriors. Conservatives could quite persuasively offer a vision by which the left, through its collaboration with the Soviet occupiers, had betrayed national interests and shared responsibility for their crimes. By way of illustration, the Polish right had a very strong ensemble of historical resources with which to counter socialist narratives. It could overshadow collaboration with Nazi crimes by underscoring Poland's heroic resistance to German occupiers, a narrative which drew more support from average voters than expressions of regret. Moreover, right-wing parties could easily cleanse themselves from the stain of the Holocaust. The latter had occurred half-a-century ago under a very different political constellation, whereas former communists were alive and well. Building on a long history of enmity and war with Russia, Polish conservatives depicted the Soviet period as one of colonial subjugation in which the country's economic development served the needs of the colonizers. Accordingly, they dismissed any achievement associated to industrialization as based on a backward and inefficient technology that was anyway oriented to Soviet military needs. Communists were also accused of eradicating traditional Polish culture in all its regional diversity, of repressing the Catholic Church – strongly rooted in Polish society – and of annihilating much of its traditional elite and intelligentsia[13] (Zarycki 2007:487-8). The communist past has been likewise a stigma for the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP), incapable of shredding it despite embracing the market economy and liberal democracy. The socialists failed to put forth a historical narrative (F. Laczó, pers. comm., May 2013) and switched nostalgic class appeals to "the salaried and wage earners" with depoliticized slogans such as "national middle", "modernization". Despite political overtures to the right, never reciprocated, their continued presence in the corridors of

[13] Polish conservatives often reference the Katyn massacre of 1940 in this regard. The mass killing occurred in the Katyn woods, after Soviet secret police had rounded up several Polish officers and members of Polish intelligentsia.

power emboldened its most resolute enemies in the conviction that the new, post-communist regime lacked legitimacy (Enyedi 2016:214). For all the reasons above, communist nostalgia has emerged mostly as a genuine, grassroots phenomenon that remains generally depoliticized, at least in its more explicit expressions.

## 5. The Rise of Memory Institutes

Mnemonic warriors in Central and Eastern Europe faced a twin fiasco: The first relates to a perceived failure to secure the emergent democracies from an internal communist threat that not only had survived lustration but had organized itself around credible political contenders on the left. The second was manifest in the growth of informal socialist nostalgia, interpreted as a dangerous anti-democratic tendency that is "untrue" to history. Some of them invoked the concept of an "unfinished revolution"[14] (Mark 2010) to convey the idea that the negotiated transitions of 1989 – emblematic of the Hungarian and Polish roundtables talks in which communist reformers and mostly liberal dissidents took part – had allowed a class of communist apparatchiks to retain power. The involvement of liberal activists in the Polish and Hungarian negotiations was, from this perspective, revealing of their unsatisfactory record with regards to fighting communism, or even of a complicity in legitimating their participation in the democratic order. Many of these themes dominated the political campaigns that helped elect Fidesz (1998 2010 and 2014) in Hungary, Solidarity Electoral Action (1997) and Law and Justice (2005) in Poland, or the Justice

[14] Orbán's speech during the ceremony marking the anniversary of the 1848 revolution, pronounced in 2011, shortly after winning an election he called a "revolution in the ballot box", perfectly conveys a dramatized sense of frustration with the outcome of 1989:"There were also many at the end of the 1980s who did not believe they would live to see the end of the dictatorship, but there were also those who believed that there was, on the other side, a free Hungary, one we would reach when the time came. This made the transition wonderful, we wanted to believe that with the repatriation of Soviet troops, democratic elections and the liberation of the economy, we would arrive to that other Hungary, one that is strong and successful. We soon came to realize that we didn't' get there, we stumbled upon the colors, the faces and the air of the past, we failed to break away from 40 years of dictatorship." (MTI 2011)

and Truth Alliance (2004) in Romania (Mark 2010:1-3 14). Disagreements with liberal dissidents seemed irresolvable at this point: Michnik saw in the roundtable negotiations something to celebrate, a shunning of violence in exchange for stability, a demonstration of Central Europe's civilizational maturity (1999:239-45). But for mnemonic warriors, negotiations were synonym with collaboration and with the absence of a ritual of extirpation.

What they viewed as an ailing social body required an intervention, a genuine anti-communist national renewal that would eradicate all remnants of the past from the political system and the mentalities of citizens. Michal Kopeček, a Czech historian and close observer of the country's memory politics, summarizes mnemonic warriors' epiphany in the following way: "The right at the end of the 1990s would say the transition had failed precisely because we didn't come to terms with the communist past, therefore we have to do it completely differently, and we must look at our neighbors" for examples (M. Kopeček, pers.comm., December 2012). An official memory had to be produced, legitimated and diffused in ways that would awaken citizens from their complacent stupor and mobilize them against a ubiquitous "communist threat". To be made durable, that is, to establish a "regime of truth" (Foucault 1980), mnemonic warriors sought to achieve a monopoly over mediated forms of memory that, via generational change, would gradually replace the politically unreliable, mass individual memories of socialism. In a certain sense, mnemonic warriors slowly but surely came to the realization that "there is no spontaneous memory, that we must deliberately create archives, maintain anniversaries, organize celebrations" (Nora 2007:149).

The winning solution was the establishment of state-sponsored memory institutes, an innovation that brought about a genuine mnemonic revolution, not in ethos or substance, but in the technologies of remembrance. Tasked with scrutinizing the past through archival and testimonial research and, on that basis, enunciate the "true" history of communism, memory institutes pursue

this objective by concentrating an unusual number of memory practices in a single institution (See Figure 1). Having realized that the effects of lustration were insufficient and would anyway eventually fade (Ł. Michalski, pers. comm., January 2013)[15], bets have been increasingly placed on the diffusion of an official, scientifically-sanctioned memory across a range of fields. These practices, which take the concept of "communist crimes" as their object, fundamentally consist of archival research and public education activities, although some of them have taken important roles in lustration – more so in the past –, the storage and digitalization of communist-era archives, or in assisting in the prosecution of "communist crimes". They are staffed with scholars who enjoy privileged access to archival sources and victim testimonies and whose research is heavily focused on these sources (See Chapter 4). Memory institute scholars propagate the results of their research in conferences, exhibits, journals, magazines, school textbooks, lay history books and media outlets.

While some sources of inspiration for this model can be found outside the region, namely in the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, the Washington Holocaust Museum or Yad Vashem in Israel, Germany provided the blueprint, just as it had for EU memory politics. Two bodies caught the attention of mnemonic warriors: The BStU, formed in 1990, and the Investigatory Commission on the Working-Through of the History and Consequences of the SED Dictatorship in Germany, established in 1992. These rapid German initiatives were partly a reaction to a diffused sense that the country had taken too long to address the Nazi legacy and should now show celerity in dealing with East German communism (Yoder 1999:67). The commission, headed by former dissident and

[15] "Lustration in Poland was a process that nearly didn't exist in the sense of eliminating former communist secret service officers and agents from public life … Lustration is going to end at some point, within maximum the next 20 years, it is simple biology, whereas those archives we do have will be a question for history and politics" (Ł. Michalski, pers. comm., January 2013)

then Christian Democrat deputy Rainer Eppelmann, had as its main purpose assessing the regime's abuses, eventually inspiring similar commissions in the Baltics (1998) and Romania (2006). But it was the BStU that received most praise in post-communist Europe, admired for its capacity to swiftly collect and organize enormous amounts of secret police documents and assist in the prosecution of crimes. Tellingly, the post-communist parliamentarians, civil rights movements and historians who would go on to create state-sponsored institutes established close contacts with the BStU early on. However, due to limits placed by German memory laws, the BStU never acted as a body of historical research beyond understanding the role and nature of the Stasi secret police (H. Altendorf, pers. comm., March 2013).

No such laws were put in place in the rest of the former communist world, where memory institutes emerge one after the other, adding a national renewal "twist" to the German precedent. Mandated by state bodies to oversee mnemonic production, memory institutes justify this mission with references to objectivism, patriotism and anti-totalitarianism. The Baltic countries, whose trajectory differs from the above in that memory politics serve the legitimation of independence vis-a-vis Russia, are the first to show signs of activity. With a name that implicitly questions Holocaust uniqueness, the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania, founded in 1992, purports "to establish historical truth and justice" and "to investigate the physical and spiritual genocide of Lithuanians". In 1993 the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia is created with the support of Latvia's large, North-American diaspora community, and while primarily a museum, gradually approaches the memory institute model by embracing a research and public education profile. These models were not immediate emulated in Central and Eastern Europe, and a true example-setter would only emerge in 1998, with the appearance of the Polish IPN. The most

generously funded memory institute and one of the largest historical institutions world[16], the IPN legally operates under the concept of "Communist crimes." [17] The institute's innovative blend of scientific research, public education and lustration prerogatives captivated regional attention (L. Kieres, pers. comm., January 2013), but furthermore, its own internal evolution allowed outside observers to gauge the limits and potentials of the various mnemonic practices produced. While some observers were taken aback by the controversies occasioned by the memory institute's involvement with lustration (P. Žáček, pers. comm., December 2012), its public education and research branches, established with the help of former dissidents[18], proved successful and unexpectedly grew in importance (K. Persak, pers. comm., January 2013).

The public education focus is palpable in the subsequent evolution of memory politics: Hungary's House of Terror[19], inaugurated in 2002, intends to make "people understand that the sacrifice for freedom was not in vain" and ended with "the victory of the forces of freedom and independence". Slovakia's Nation's Memory Institute, created in 2003, vows to "promote ideas of freedom and defense of democracy against such regimes as Nazism and Communism." Two years later the foundation of Romania's Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes comes is officially linked to a commitment "to administer and analyze, in a rigorous and scientific manner, the

[16] IPN boasts 2500 historians among its ranks, 80 km of archives and 1000 educational projects yearly, having also hosted 400 exhibits by 2013 (Ł. Michalski, pers. comm., January 2013)

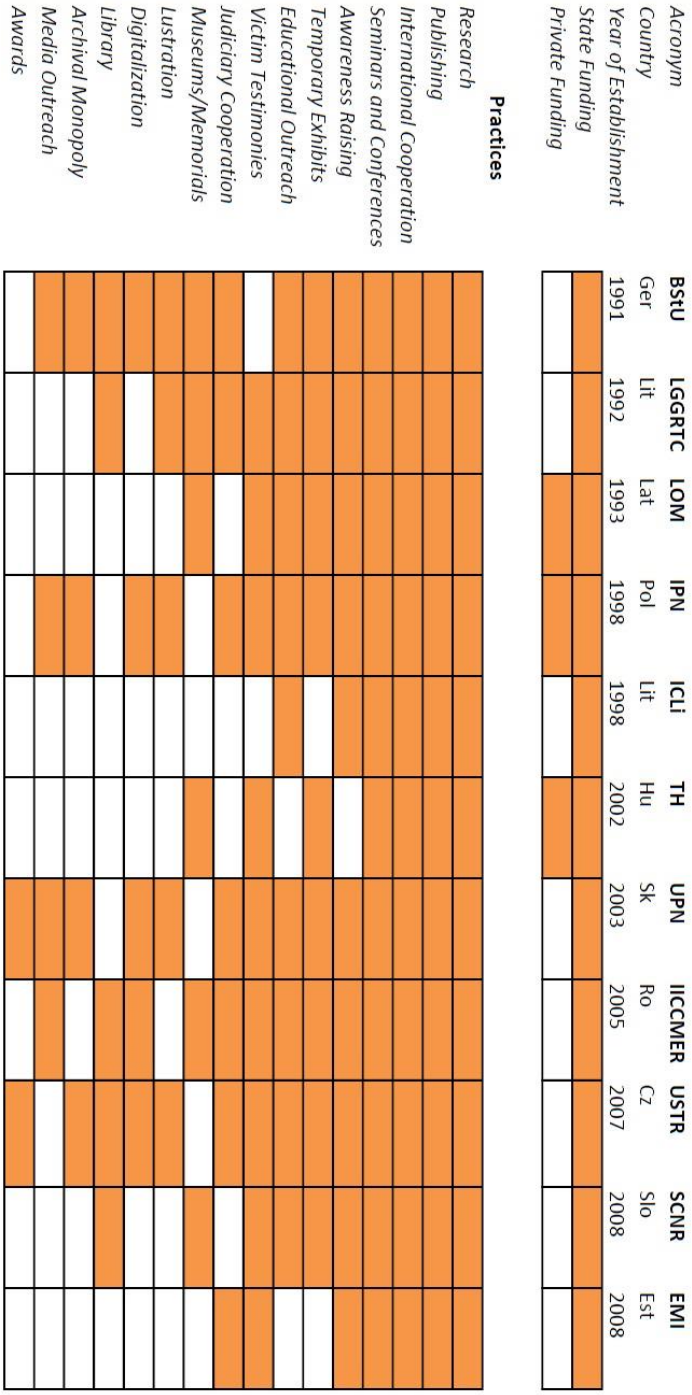
[17] The legal term has been revised several times. Currently, it defines "communist crimes" as crimes committed by the functionaries of the communist apparatus and is inspired by the similar concept of Nazi crimes, although Polish legislators specifically rejected making the two terms legally equivalent.

[18] The IPN's public education department was set up with assistance from Karta, a Foundation that continues the work of the dissident illegal underground newspaper by the same name, and that was founded when Poland was under martial law, in 1982.

[19] While primarily a museum, it is engaged in several of the practices of memory institutes as part of the Public Foundation for the Research of Central and East European History and Society (created in 1999), including historical research, public education activities and collection of victim testimonies.

memory of the communist regime in Romania." In 2007, the Czech Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes is established with the task of weighing the consequences of "the two totalitarian ideologies". The following year Slovenia's Study Centre for National Reconciliation was set up to respond to "an objective need for increased state activity" in establishing "historical facts" about 20th century history. That same year, the Estonian Institute of National Memory assumes the task of investigating and educating the public about "anti-human regimes" and "the totalitarian ideologies that created such regimes". The Estonian Institute replaced the international commission created in 1998 to investigate both Nazi and Communist periods. The other two Baltic nations saw similar commissions arise, although they experienced a different fate: Lithuania's Commission maintained its name but has become virtually indistinguishable from many of the memory institutes across the region, adopting a strong public education profile, whereas Latvia's froze its activities due to budgetary constraints in the wake of the financial crisis in 2008.

*Figure 1: Practices of Memory Institutes*



## 6. Europeanizing Politics of Truth

This institutional flurry sought to emulate aspects of the EU's regime of remembrance and therefore respond to its informal demands. While dedicated overwhelmingly to the study of communism, memory institutes generally had smaller departments investigating Nazi history and allowed post-communist countries to cosmetically fulfill a long-term Western expectation with regards to memory politics. Nevertheless, and notwithstanding important exceptions such as the Jedwabne[20] investigation by Poland's memory institute, as well as several Holocaust education initiatives in Lithuania, Nazi crimes have received scant attention, whereas attempts to glorify "independence fighters" who collaborated in Nazi crimes persistently cast doubt upon the sincerity of these efforts. In the latest of many similar controversies, Lithuania's Genocide and Resistance Center, already a target of Jewish groups due to usage of the term "Genocide" (T. Burauskaitė, pers. comm., January 2013), has been attacked for defending wartime leaders Jonas Noreika and Kazys Škirpa as heroes of independence. Noreika is accused of ordering the mass shooting of Jews as local commander, whereas Škirpa, who had publicly denounced Jews, headed the provisional government of Lithuania in 1941, when 5,000 Jews perished in pogroms and mass murders. The Center has contested the accusations, claiming there are no documents to link Noreika to the murders, and that Škirpa tried to save Jews from being deported (Frazer 2017).

The imitation of EU approaches to memory is even more visible in the trajectory of post-communist mnemonic warriors in European arenas, particularly following the 2004 accession. Memory institutes have featured prominently in the EU Council Presidencies of post-communist

[20] Jedwabne is the name of a small town where a Jewish pogrom occurred in 1941 during the German occupation of Poland. The IPN carried out an investigation that concluded 340 Polish Jews were locked and burned alive in a barn with the willing participation of their Polish neighbors, causing public uproar and contestation from conservative historians who disputed the claims.

countries, who have deployed them in the organization of public hearings and conferences dedicated to remembrance in the EP. Such initiatives mirrored several ceremonies in European institutions dedicated to the celebration of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27th. For instance, the 2008 Slovenian Presidency of the EU organized a hearing on "Crimes Committed by Totalitarian Regimes" with the aim of improving knowledge and public awareness of totalitarian crimes. In March 2009, the Czech Presidency of the EU hosted another public hearing on "European Conscience and Crimes of Totalitarian Communism: 20 Years After". On February of the net year another international conference on "Crimes of the Communist Regimes" took place, organized by the Czech government and its memory institute in cooperation with the EP, the EC and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation[21]. The conference ended in calls to bring justice to "perpetrators of Communist crimes" and called for the "creation of a new international court with a seat within the EU for the crimes of communism." In March 2011, the EP was once again chosen to host a hearing organized by the European People's Party and the Hungarian Presidency of the EU on "What do Young Europeans know about Totalitarianisms?", and in August 2011 the Polish Presidency organized a conference to celebrate the Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Totalitarian Regimes.

These political initiatives were advancing what is informally known as the "Prague Process", named after the 2008 Prague Declaration on European Conscience and Communism. The document constitutes to this day the most coherent exposition of the measures mnemonic warriors deem necessary to incorporate communism into the framework of EU remembrance, and attempts to evince the EU's ostensible openness to plural voices. The text is a faithful reflection of the anti-

[21] The Konrad Adenauer Foundation, linked to the conservative Christian Democratic Union in Germany, also supports memory institutes' activities directly. In Romania, it allocates some 50,000 euros a year for public education initiatives (A. Muraru, pers. comm., February 2013).

totalitarian narrative, founded on the comparison between communism and Nazism, and offers concrete steps aimed at an overhaul of Europe's memory regime. It seeks the recognition of communist and Nazi ideologies as inseparable from the extermination and deportation of "whole nations and groups of population", describes communist regimes as "an integral and horrific part of Europe's common history" and points to "pan-European responsibility for crimes committed by Communism," advocating an assessment of "Communist crimes" following the Nuremberg Tribunal formulation. The declaration calls for the establishment of an international day of remembrance for the victims of Nazism and communism, but also recommends national governments and European bodies to take concrete steps such: a) having parliaments "acknowledge Communist crimes as crimes against humanity, leading to the appropriate legislation," b) organizing an international conference on the crimes of these regimes "with the results to be largely publicized world-wide"; c) the set-up of committees tasked with collecting information on "violations of human rights under totalitarian Communist regimes at national level with a view to collaborating closely with a Council of Europe committee of experts"; and d) "adjustment and overhaul of European history textbooks so that children could learn and be warned about Communism and its crimes in the same way as they have been taught to assess the Nazi crimes." But most revealing of the scientific ambitions of this new stage of memory politics is the proposal to establish an Institute of European Memory and Conscience that would serve as a "research institute for totalitarianism studies, developing scientific and educational projects and providing support to networking of national research institutes specializing in the subject of totalitarian experience" (Prague Declaration 2008).

In what was an emblem of liberal capitulation to conservative memory politics, the late dissident Havel could be found among its founding signatories. In the inaugural address of the international conference[22] that culminated in the declaration, Havel put his weight behind the initiative:

"Establishing institutes of national remembrance in various European countries is a good and important process. These institutions remind us of two totalitarian systems Europe bred and that subsequently spread all over the world. Europe is thus responsible for giving birth to Marxism and Nazism … The communist regime was – if we consider the millions of dead – probably worse than the Nazi regime." (Mejstřík and Winkelmann 2009:17)

Other prominent signatories included former Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis, Former Minister for Education, Youth and Sport and Vice-president of the Slovenian Democratic Party Milan Zver, Former Romanian Minister of Justice Valeriu Stoica, the Vice-President of the Liberal International Asparuh Panov, Vice President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe Emanuelis Zingeris, MEPs from Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Germany, Latvia, Slovakia, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden, Finland, United Kingdom and the Netherlands as well as other prominent dissidents and historians.

In a continuing show of political support for the objectives of the Prague Declaration, 40 MEPs, overwhelmingly affiliated with the European People's Party and the post-communist right[23], formed the informal group Reconciliation of European Histories in 2010. Their declared intention

[22] The International Conference "European Conscience and Communism" was held in June 2008 in Prague, and was hosted by the Senate of the Czech Parliament in partnership with the Czech memory institute and the Ministry of Defense, among others.

[23] Between 2010 and 2014 32 of its 40 members came from the post-Communist right, while 33 belonged to the EPP (Neumayer 2015:13)

is to reconcile "different historical narratives in Europe" and "consolidate them into a united European memory of the past", but the group makes clear this narrative should underscore how post-communist "captive nations" were excluded "from our common European home" and from "50 years of our true history" (Reconciliation, n.d.). The group has since been involved in the organization of several public hearings on totalitarianism in the EP.

In another noticeable similarity with EU memory politics, post-communist elites sought to cover their promotion of the anti-totalitarian framework in scientific coating. If the EU had established the European University Institute, the Liaison Committee of Historians and the Jean Monnet Action in order to encourage EU-friendly research, post-communist politicians saw it fit to deepen the cooperation of sympathetic scholars by mobilizing EU Institutions to this end. With the purpose of furthering the activities of memory institutes, the Platform of European Memory and Conscience is formed in 2011 as a Pan-European educational initiative with a representative office in Brussels. The Platform presently includes 55 members including, besides memory institutes, a few foundations, victim associations, and US and Canadian groups linked to diaspora communities (Büttner and Delius 2015:396). In the words of its director, the Platform's task is to "exchange information, bring common projects, needs and interests, join voices and create a common European level at which we can work" (N. Winkelmann, pers. comm., December 2012). Funded by the International Visegrad Fund, which is in turn financially sustained by the Visegrad states (Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic), the group was set-up as a non-governmental organization with the support of both the EP and the Council of the EU. It has already helped memory institutes obtain extra visibility and EU or other external funding for common projects (Ł. Michalski, pers. comm., January 2013) as it assists in pooling and coordinating applicants, hence enhancing the likelihood of successful applications. This has moreover provided a boost to

regionalization, since projects involving transnational partnerships are more likely to secure much sought-after external funding and, if successful, output practices boast an added European legitimacy.

Ultimately, the Platform is manifestation of a transnational, post-communist memory regime whose representatives increasingly orient their actions towards each-other. Governed by the logic of anti-totalitarianism, the days when dissidents such as Michnik and Havel were praised across Europe for encouraging national regret over communist rule seemed well behind. Instead, the EU, which had often in the past demanded post-communist regret over Nazism, was being indicted for its alleged failure to acknowledge communist crimes, arguably in the same way that it had previously indicted Eastern Europe for failing to acknowledge its role in the Holocaust.

## 7. An Effective Challenge?

But what have been the consequences of post-communist elites' seeming emulation of EU memorialization techniques on EU remembrance itself? A deeper analysis of the parliamentary debate that preceded the approval of a European Day of Remembrance for the victims of Stalinism and Nazism can shed some light on this issue. Conservative dissidents such as Sandra Kalniete from Latvia, Vytautas Landsbergis from Lithuania and László Tőkés from Romania spearheaded the initiative, a key demand of the Prague Declaration. Among the various party groupings in the EP the Conservatives in the European People's Party (EPP), but also Liberals and some Greens expressed support for the original draft, whereas the far-left refused to take part in the debate. The socialists pushed for a compromise based on a softer version: The original draft, they argued, opened the door to historical misinterpretation, made dubious claims of historical objectivity and ignored the need to recognize the plurality and ambivalence of people’s memories of the 20$^{th}$ century. They also proposed replacing an all-encompassing “totalitarian” description of

communism with “authoritarian” or “dictatorship”, while insisting on the primacy of Nazism in a common European history (Neumayer 2005:7,11). The final compromise would feature a warning against the political instrumentalization of history, while broadening the scope of dictatorships condemned from Nazism and communism to fascism and Stalinism. This was a concession to the socialists, who could now distinguish Stalinism as the “totalitarian” expression of a more multifaceted and divisible Marxist ideology. Yet conservative dissidents could also claim to have successfully challenged the foundations of the EU regime of remembrance by elevating Stalinist crimes to the level of Nazi crimes.

The support of Western conservative groupings for the bill has two possible interpretations. Either it signifies a willingness from Western European conservatism to endorse anti-totalitarianism, or it merely reflects the EPP's solidarity towards an initiative dear to their post-communist colleagues. At the risk of appearing to disregard Eastern Europe’s historical experience and political voice, the EU was admittedly unable to reject the historical representation put forward by Central and Eastern Europe, where legislative and other state bodies have, in the first years of transition as well as in more recent years, endorsed official interpretations of the past (Apor 2010; Beattie 2005:26; Kiss 2009:129). However, as Apor (2010) notes, there is a Western discomfort and fatigue with the prospects of again coming to terms with a European dictatorial past after having dealt with fascism. Commission staff have reportedly refused suggestions from mnemonic warriors to include measurements of awareness about “the totalitarian past” in their annual and encompassing Eurobarometer survey (N. Winkelmann, pers. comm., December 2012). Moreover, the EC is aware of the contradiction between post-communist politics of truth and the EU’s politics of regret, and has on occasion made this clear. During a hearing in Brussels organized by the Slovenian Presidency and the EC on crimes committed by totalitarian regimes in April 2008 in Brussels, the

center-right politician Jacques Barrot, then Vice-President of the EC responsible for Justice, Freedom and Security, made an implicit reference to the precocity of post-communist efforts to Europeanize their narrative, and the very different role the EU assumed with respect to the Holocaust: "All countries ... must find their own way of coming to terms with their past ... and of achieving reconciliation. The EU cannot do this for them." Barrot went on to underscore the EU's lack of "authority to act in this area" and its role as a facilitator "by encouraging discussion, fostering the sharing of experience and best practice, and bringing the various players together" (Barrot 2008:9).

Funding allocation patterns from EU remembrance programs provide the most unequivocal confirmation of Brussel's reluctance to fully embrace post-communist politics of truth. Memory research institutes do not receive any direct funding from Brussels, although they do obtain grants from the Active European Remembrance Fund, a part of the EU's Europe for Citizens Program that finances commemorative projects. While the program's guidelines stress the centrality of Nazism and Stalinism to European memory, the EU conveys an overwhelming preference for Holocaust-related projects at the expense of initiatives geared towards a clear-cut condemnation of communism. In 2009, 75 percent of funding went to projects related to World War II crimes and the Holocaust 17 percent to Stalinist crimes, and 8 percent to projects that involved both (Littoz-Monnet 2012:1195). Moreover, the program relies on pre-existing networks of Holocaust remembrance, such as the Fundamental Rights Agency, Euroclio, International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, all of which are well versed in advancing the frame of Holocaust uniqueness (Plessow 2015:383-6). Besides the several rejected applications, a lack of EU feedback on the motives for these dismissals aggravates the frustration of Eastern European actors (T. Burauskaitė, pers. comm., January 2013).

## 8. Conclusion

Notwithstanding the above, the various hearings in the EP on totalitarianism, as well as the foundation of EU-backed umbrella organizations for memory institutes, indicate that mnemonic warriors are making strides in institutionalizing an EU-wide memory of communism from within. This is in part a structural consequence of their accession to the EU in 2004, but the emulation of some of the processes that led to the EU's regime of remembrance was of similar import. On the surface of it, mnemonic warriors have sought a regional consensus on remembrance comparable to the one promoted by the EU since the 1980s. They have established an institutional apparatus that, while mostly preoccupied with communism, nominally responds to calls for coming to terms with the legacy of the Holocaust, although co-operation with Holocaust-related organizations has been very difficult (R. Grosescu, pers. comm., February 2013) or according to some accounts, not sincerely attempted (U. Mählert, pers. comm., March 2013)[24]. This apparatus has also provided incentives and networking opportunities for historians of communism, similarly to past EU initiatives to engage scholarship friendly to its core values. And just as the EU had demanded member states to account for their role in the pan-European phenomenon of the Holocaust, the post-communist coalition of mnemonic warriors has leveraged EU institutions to call on member states – particularly Western ones – to recognize a pan-European responsibility for communism.

How to decipher the continuing marginality of mnemonic warriors in EU memory politics? I venture that the EU's resistance reveals not just a clash in mnemonic substance (Holocaust uniqueness versus Nazi-Communist equalization), but an unwillingness to accommodate its

[24] Platform members were "not interested in getting a representative sample of organizations dealing with the past in Europe … They try to establish a platform for both totalitarian regimes to get European money but without looking for contact and discussion with those dealing for decades in western Europe with National-socialism, or even with those Czech or Polish institutions who were involved in the [Holocaust education and awareness] Stockholm process" (U. Mählert, pers. comm., March 2013)

driving *ethos*. Morgan (2010) has cautioned against the simplistic claim that differences in cultures of remembrance amount basically to disagreements over mnemonic content, insisting instead on verifying possible divergences in their modes of remembrance, that is, in how an injunction to remember is articulated in each regime. And indeed, post-communist elites have done more than merely supplementing European memory with its "missing" half, subverting the unifying function of Holocaust memory by bringing to the table a combative and polarizing post-communist memory.

Frictions between incompatible modes of remembrance (See Figure 2) are most glaring in two dimensions: In Western Europe, remembrance is no longer an – exclusively – state prerogative, instead, memory is formulated from a plurality of positions within civil society and the transnational arena (Müller 2002:9), while the nation state is increasingly demystified and made responsible for the horrors of the past. Tellingly, many organizations promoting the Holocaust narrative in Europe include very active civil society groups, organizations of children of survivors of Nazi crimes and the European Jewish Congress (Littoz-Monnet 2012:1195-6). In contrast, the post-communist injunction to remember is enunciated from a position of officialdom and driven by memory institutes responsible for centralizing mnemonic production domestically (M. Pullmann, pers. comm., December 2012). This is, perhaps unsurprisingly, consistent with the memory politics of state socialism, during which the state produced and imposed a meta-narrative, but often did so with due care to the sensitivities of fellow communist states. Secondly, EU memory politics have sought to build spaces for reflection and regret from a position of consensus, whereas post-communist elites have been embroiled in a politically charged struggle to establish a crudely "truthful" interpretation of the past, one that has repeatedly consigned widespread instances of Nazi collaboration into oblivion (Laignel-Lavastine 2004; Rupnow 2009; Wulf 2008).

Granted, the EU has partly engaged in its own "politics of truth" by seeking such a minimum consensus regarding the centrality of the Holocaust, one preceded by a polarized struggle over truth within the German public sphere. Nevertheless, it came to encourage a painful process of admission of national guilt rather than indicting Germany and turning it into the target of member states' efforts to externalize guilt. This stands in stark contrast with Central and Eastern European efforts to externalize communism as a Russian or Asiatic imposition (Neumann 2002:121-3) and to elevate their own nations to the status of heroic victims.

Crucially, there are important parallels between Western European nations' post-war attempts to dismiss their own complicity with Nazism as imposed by German occupying forces and post-communist politics of truth and their externalization of responsibility for communist and Nazi crimes. We may deduce from Europe's experiences with constructing memory regimes that externalization is a necessary stage in the reformulation of national identities following turbulent transitional periods – whether post-War or post-communism. Unlike Central and Eastern Europe, where power elites have not been substantially reshuffled since the transformations of 1989-1990, Western Europe witnessed the coming of age of a new generation that was established enough to counter prevailing historical and cultural frames. One may logically conclude that post-communist Europe's move from politics of truth to politics of regret is merely a matter of time, of allowing for a generational change to bear fruit. This scenario, while plausible, seems unwarranted at the moment for a number of reasons. Firstly, the Western transition to politics of regret occurred in a relatively successful period of European integration, one that was accompanied by relative economic prosperity and political stability. The current political crisis, felt across the continent, has variously brought to the fore political polarization, the rise of so-called populist alternatives and of the far-right, growth in Euroscepticism and xenophobia as well as economic stagnation or

moderate growth, inviting a degree of caution. Secondly, the post-war Politics of truth of Western Europe were never embedded in long-term patterns of political competition, as they are in Central and Eastern Europe – a point that will become more forceful in the next chapter. How or why future generations of political elites would break long-established cultural frames that shape and facilitate political competition remains unclear.

*Figure 2: Memory Regimes Compared*

| **EU Memory Regime**<br>Politics of Regret | **Post-Communist Memory Regime**<br>Politics of Truth |
|---|---|
| **Mnemonic Substance** | |
| Holocaust | Nazism and Communism |
| Local Collaboration | Externalization |
| Divisibility of Communism | Indivisibility of Communism |
| Demystification | Mystification |
| Strong Historiographic Field | Vulnerable Historiographic Field |
| **Mode of Remembrance** | |
| Dialogue, Reflection, Exchange | Injunction to Remember |
| Scholarly Engagement | Scholarly Engagement |
| Consensual | Polarization |
| Responsibility | Victimhood |
| Pluralization | Centralization |
| State Retreat | State-Driven |
| Public Education | Public Education |
| Regionalization | Regionalization |
| Never Again (Holocaust) | Never Again (Totalitarianism) |
| Legitimation of political order | Legitimation of political order |

# CHAPTER 3: FROM REGIME DIVIDE TO MEMORY CLEAVAGE

The ubiquitous presence of memory in post-communist Europe, often naturalized as an inevitable consequence of coming to terms with a painful past, has been consequential to post-communist politics, as most regional observers would point out. In fact, the particular structuring of political fields in the early transition may very well explain the continuing presence of direct or indirect references to the memory of communism. While there are several studies of post-communist memory of state socialism, as well as a large body of research dealing with the region's party systems and its (potential) cleavages, there is a palpable absence of work bridging these two subfields. Beginning with a thorough review and engagement with the literature on cleavages and concluding with an empirical contribution to the scholarly debate, this chapter will argue that regardless of electoral volatility, the memory divide is sufficiently rooted across the region to merit treatment as a cleavage. I reach this conclusion through two contributions:

Firstly, while cleavage scholars recognize the significance of memory in post-communist political competition, they often conceptualize it narrowly as measurable strictly by its most obvious manifestations, namely salient debates about the blameworthiness of former communist officials. Memory in this reading would indeed fit the category of a mere political divide, a salient political issue that occasionally splits the electorate, but does so without mobilizing a coherent collective identity, an organizational apparatus that sustains it, and even lacking a stable social basis on which the politicized division is based. I will argue this understanding, most likely determined by political scientists' methodological preferences, underestimates the associative properties of symbology surrounding communism, which allows memory to effectively embed divisions ordinarily categorized as liberal-conservative, pro-market vs statist, or ethnic. With the express purpose of

exposing the mechanisms that allow ordinary political cleavages to become embedded in collective memory narratives, I adopt a version of the political articulation approach. In contrast to structuralist accounts, the articulation school can help us make sense of how a region-wide memory cleavage achieved prominence, directing our attention to the assembling of disparate 'ideological alliances' that ensure the cleavage's survival. Moreover, I argue that through their continued intransigence towards politicians perceived as 'tainted' by compromises with former communism, conservative dissidents' have ensured a greater power of articulation in post-communist. Put differently, their gradual monopolization of the symbolic capital of anti-communism has bestowed upon them a unique ability to invoke, interpret and manipulate the symbols and narratives that constitute political identities, accounting for mnemonic warriors' continued investment in anti-communism.

Relatedly, I stress the centrality of memory to the articulation of cleavages by pointing to its widespread organizational manifestation in state-sponsored memory institutes. Cleavage scholars deem that an organizational expression is essential to providing the cleavage with "social closure", that is, with the mechanisms that stabilize it (Kriesi *et al.* 1995). In Eastern Europe, this function has either been considered elusive or attributed to political parties – and rightly so, as they play a vital role. However, merely focusing on parties as a cleavage's organizational manifestation risks, once again, misapprehending the social diffusion of those same cleavages. Stable, long-term social divisions may partly owe their existence to the political articulation strategies of political parties, but once these divisions crystallize, those same parties may become expendable for the cleavage's survival and reproduction. Which is why we should widen the analytical net and identify the mechanisms of reproduction *also* in the broader social structure. This is precisely what I offer by

locating memory institutes as an essential and all but ignored organizational manifestation of the memory cleavage.

I begin by a critical assessment of the cleavage literature, addressing some of the long-standing debates in the subdiscipline with a view on estimating its continuing significance for contemporary political developments as well as its applicability to the fluid and transitional reality of post-communism.

## 1. Cleavage Theory: Keeping up with a Changing World

In Political Sociology and Political Science, the term cleavage conveys a deep-seated social conflict that has long-term expression in democratic politics. Cleavages structure the content of party competition in durable ways, grouping diverse issues into larger ideological blocks that facilitate the creation of stable voter identities. Cleavages thus provide political parties with reliable sources of support, but beyond these points of agreement there are various differing accounts of their origins, bases, malleability and measurement.

Bartolini and Mair (1990) provided the most encompassing contemporary consensus on the definition of cleavage by arguing that unlike mere political divides, cleavages are a form of political antagonism that includes the following three elements: (1) a social-structural basis, such as class, religion, status or education; (2) a collective identity to which this group can make claim and; (3) an organizational substantiation that is durable and coherent. According to this definition, anything short of these three elements would fail to ensure the persistent structuring effects on political systems that typify cleavages (Bornschier 2009:2). Most theoretical debates around the concept of cleavages still grapple with this definition, perhaps a logical outcome of the subdiscipline's socio-geographic underpinning in Western Europe. Lipset and Rokkan (1967)

authored the first grand theory of cleavages, which they inserted in a macro-historical framework. The pair registered a 'freezing' of the major party alternatives and a fully mobilized electorate in Western Europe, subsequently attempting to trace back the origins of decades-long stability in party systems. They identified four principal cleavages that responded to the path-dependent effects on voting behavior of the structural transformations brought about by modernity: Nation-building processes had given rise to two stable antagonisms: a territorial one between center and the culturally distinct periphery, and a religious cleavage founded upon the rivalry between the mobilizing nation-state and the historically established corporate privileges of the church. Functional oppositions had in their turn given rise to another two cleavages in a subsequent context of advanced cultural homogenization, territorial consolidation and industrialization: the first, sectoral, between the agricultural and industrial sectors; the second and youngest, the class cleavage.

As they ventured their explanatory account of Western European party systems, Lipset and Rokkan were also bringing forward theoretical formulations that would shape the subdiscipline well beyond the region. The duo asserted that the final configuration of cleavages was contingent on the chronological order in which the social conflicts at their root manifested themselves. Their logic was the following: party systems form along ideological lines largely drawn by a pre-existing structural division, and subsequent divides do not as easily find articulation in that same system. By extension, new divides may be re-organized, appropriated or nullified by the actors operating in a concrete political field. In particular, this would explain the limits to working class mobilization in countries with prior mobilization efforts by nationalist, religious or agrarian movements (Bornschier 2009:3). Lipset and Rokkan went even further to argue that cleavages can continue to manifest themselves in a party system even after the original division that gave rise to

it had subsided. The crucial implication is that the initial structural basis from which a cleavage emerges is secondary to the lock-in effects precipitated by the associated critical junctures. A further, related implication is that these lock-in or path-dependent effects should involve a continuing articulation of social bases in ways that ensure the survival of the collective identities that define the original cleavage.

While extremely influential, the model suffered from what many subsequent scholars described as an overly static view of cleavages, particularly as post-modernism and post-industrialization were accompanied by greater volatility in electoral systems. Indeed, West European party systems have been 'challenged' since at least the 1970s by prominent value-based divides that cut across or even realign previous cleavages (Inglehart 1990). These value-based divides would antagonize voters according to their libertarian or authoritarian leanings, which some have seen as evidencing a decline of the centrality of social structures in prompting cleavages. The critique of structuralism has been articulated via a re-questioning of the usefulness and applicability of Bartolini and Mair's definition, deemed too demanding (Enyedi 2008:288) and tied to the Western European historical trajectory. Unsurprisingly, the rather narrow applicability of Bartolini and Mair's definition of cleavages became particularly glaring to scholars dealing with the new democracies of South America and Eastern Europe. The classical definition, "emphasizing the social structure-collective identity-organization linkage," showed striking parallels to the mobilization sequences described in the social movements literature, and hence seemed more apt "to analyze the initial mobilization of cleavages" (Bornschier 2009:4). Instead, much recent scholarship has proposed collective identities as the central dimension of cleavages. This proposal responds in part to calls to explain cleavages' continued sources of sustenance, as well as the role of agency and institutions in their stabilization, rather than their mere structural bases, if only for the reason that "social divisions are

not translated into politics as a matter of course, but ... are decisively shaped by their political articulation" (Kriesi 1998:167). Scholars of new democracies have gone to greater lengths to put forth collective identity and agency at the core of their accounts of contemporary cleavages, although this has mostly represented a shift in emphasis rather than an outright dismissal of structuralist argumentation. Namely, Toka (1998) found that cleavage stabilization results from such identity-reinforcing practices as voting and organizational encapsulation, whereas Enyedi (2008:288) believes cleavages, while having a social basis, are more likely grounded on political-cultural categories and sustained not by social categories measured in censuses, but through institutional and value-based mechanisms. This, Enyedi adds, would not be unprecedented, as 'classical' cleavages were also sustained by trade unions, churches, intellectuals or media outlets.

However, many scholars have used the emergence of value divides as an opportunity to explore new social foundations for cleavages. In Western Europe, this exploration has uncovered mostly unaccounted for structural bases: Evans (1999) has argued employment relations, employment structure or life styles shape cleavages in ways that indicate the continuing import of social status; Stubager (2010) and Dolezal (2010) have given credence to the possibility that education becomes the structural basis of an emerging divide; Kriesi *et al.* (2008) have depicted education as symptomatic of a wider societal rupture pitting winners against losers of globalization; Finally, and in the defense of the continuing relevance of class, Manza, Hout and Brooks (1995) and Kriesi (1998:168; 2010:675) have also noted that class has become a more complex category for which many cleavage scholars are yet to fine-tune their measurements. Beyond reaffirming the importance of searching for social structural bases even in more recent, value-based cleavages, these contributions also illustrated how the path dependencies created by the initial, historical cleavages were not as resilient as previously believed.

## 2. The Way Forward

Recent cleavage literature tends to agree on a number of corrective steps. Firstly, approaches tailored to postwar Western European politics, when social bases where stable and mechanisms of socialization more institutionalized, can no longer provide satisfactory answers to the challenges that have emerged with the concept's geographical and temporal extension. Secondly, critical junctures seem essential to understanding cleavage development, but we lack a clear picture of how their path dependent effects unfold to affect the three core elements of a cleavage – social bases, collective identity and organizational manifestation. Thirdly, disagreements are often a matter of subtle differences in relative explanatory weight. Few would dispute that the social structural bases of persistent cleavages have weakened or are less stable than before – although perhaps even fewer would reach the precipitous conclusion that structure has lost its relevance for maintaining cleavages. Those who still emphasize structural bases as the foundation of cleavages have argued that critics of structuralism overstate their weakening, calling instead for accurate categories to measure such structures. Those who emphasize agency generally do not deny the existence of these bases, but they contest the static representation of older models. To correct this, they offer a view of agents capable of shaping identities, articulating alliances and molding cleavages. At their core, they tend to place collective identities, around which their other constituting forces – structural bases and organizational manifestations – ultimately gravitate. These new accounts also acknowledge the need to elaborate the new structuring mechanisms involved, as we can no longer count on large socialization units such as factories, churches or trade unions to discipline members (Kriesi 2010:678).

A similar research avenue seems to involve conceptualizing cleavages as created and sustained by a multifaceted work of political articulation. Describing how parties naturalize some political

identities and suppress others, redefining victims and grievances into objects of mobilization, this approach highlights how the everyday work of politics ensures social closure. It also responds to renewed interest in parties as embedded in society and capable of enacting social change (De Leon, Desai and Tuğal. 2009:194, 198) while engaged in cultural, performative, and symbolic practices that create shared meanings and stable institutions (Mudge and Chen 2014:307, 319). These insights resonate among political scientists as well. Namely, Enyedi has described parties' ability to shape political agendas, foreground or background conflicts, bolster or undermine collective identities and forge coalitions among social groups (2008:295).

Rather than getting bogged down in the "key theoretical and policy issue" (Evans 2006:266) of whether to study cleavages from a structure or agency-centered approach, I suggest combining the political articulation method with Bourdieu's notion of a political field as a way of accommodating the concerns of both approaches. I argue that cleavages are better understood as social artifacts produced and reassembled within the constraints and opportunities imposed by a political field. I understand the political field as a space of struggle for political authority, with both formal and informal dimensions of power that may be long-term or periodically reformulated, namely via democratic elections. The Political field is located at the crossroads of the multiple struggles and capital exchanges occurring within the broader field of power. It offers an arena where such struggles and exchanges between economic and cultural interests find mechanisms of formal political representation as well as legitimation – namely through legislatures, political parties, lobbyists, interest groups, etc, - but also of informal – and often illegitimate - adjudication of resources, namely in the form of corruption, influence peddling, and so no. Actors who enter the field use various forms of capital in order to establish themselves in the field – a process that basically consists in converting their capital assets into political capital. Political capital can be

accumulated in a number of ways: 1) Via political legitimation, which can be obtained through a proven ability to connect to the electorate, either subjecting themselves to the ballot box or by demonstrating an ability to mobilize movements and constituencies outside the formal mechanisms of the political system; 2) Via political experience, accumulated in the exercise of power or in opposition to it, namely by demonstrating political competence within a specific post or position within the field, ability to make compromises and deals, to show autonomy towards vested interests, to strike the right alliances and obtain membership in prestigious groups, and so forth. The sources of capital that allow political actors to amass political capital are however highly dependent on factors that are internal to the structure of the field, namely the formal minutiae of the political system, or that precede the genesis of the field, such as historical path-dependencies and culturally-resonant themes and behaviors. I elaborate on the specifics of post-communist political fields further ahead.

Through the mediation of the field and contingent on their capital possessions, particularly symbolic capital, political articulators interpret events and mold historical narratives, linking them discursively and organizationally with political actors and voters. As De Leon *et al.* put it, articulation requires that we conceptualize political actors not as "some super-subject above history", but rather as "defined and created by the work of integration", which consists in generating mechanisms that tie "different moments of the social together" (2009:199). A cleavage's constitutive elements – social bases, collective identities and organizational apparatuses – develop into "social moments" the instant political elites measure, mediate and translate them within the constraints of the field, allowing their assemblage into stable wholes. The field framework prevents us from portraying agents of articulation as masters of puppets, hovering above pliable masses, but also from characterizing their work as necessarily compelled by a powerful, core identity or

an immutable social basis. Rather, the constant power struggles within the field reflect actors' efforts to ensure the continuous identification of a sizable chunk of voters with specific political projects, or as Bourdieu put it, to mobilize resources from outside the political field (Bourdieu 1991:188). If the continuity and fluidity of the ensemble is broken, what may be a mere political division will fail to crystallize into a cleavage, or if a cleavage already exists, dealignment will occur. If, on the other hand, continuity is safeguarded via social 'closure' or 'organizational encapsulation', stability for the cleavage is assured. This understanding of cleavage politics allows ample room for agency while being a far cry from the deterministic accounts of the classic Rokkanian scholarship on cleavages[25]. It acknowledges that the social-structural bases are less stable than half a century ago, but concludes that this merely underlines the complexity and importance of the work of field-bound articulation. The latter does not privilege collective identities, but rather exploits them – hence the importance of symbolic capital - in order to constantly feed the cleavage with a relatively stable social base. This approach also refuses to take a definite side on a debate that should always remain contingent on the question being posed: whether an empirical puzzle invites agency or structure-focused research should respond to the state of the art in the field and the originality of the envisioned contribution, not to a categorical ontological stance. In our particular post-communist case, with its unstable political fields and volatile electorate, the rules and structures constraining political entrepreneurs will be considerably feebler.

[25] Which is not to say Rokkan's original work can be accused of the same

## 3. Post-Communist Political Fields and the Origins of Political Cleavages

At first sight, democratizing post-communist Europe may not have appeared as an area ripe for research on cleavage politics. Party systems are considerably more volatile than their Western counterparts, a volatility to be found both in the political field, where particularly symbolic forms of capital are the object of harsh contestation, and in voting behavior. In the first, "loyalty among politicians to their parties tends to be low and, as a consequence, parties split and unite with considerable frequency" (Enyedi 2008:297). Among voters, transition has precipitated a widespread confusion about status, class, and the political forces that represent their interests. Initially, some transition scholars had even suggested a *tabula rasa* hypothesis: communism had eradicated those same civil society institutions which in the West had been responsible for facilitating links between the social structure and voting behavior, hence making the political articulation of cleavages impossible (Whitefield 2002:183-4).

By now this argument has been thoroughly rebutted: Kitschelt (1995:33) found links between voting behavior and social background characteristics such as education, age, ethnicity, class or market position. Evans (2006) has also pointed to evidence of a sufficient basis in the social structure for the appearance of political cleavages. In these readings, fluidity compared to Western Europe would result from a weak stabilization of the cleavage rather than to the lack of a potential social basis for achieving long-term "social closure" (Toka 1998:34). Moreover, post-communist political fields remain highly polarized, a pre-condition for cleavage emergence, with competing political groupings typically treating each other like enemies rather than opponents (Enyedi 2008:298). Finally, while many have noted the ephemeral nature of many post-communist parties, one should not confound their persistence with that of the underlying cleavages that give birth to the party system in which they operate (Bornschier 2009:10). As Whitefield (2002:194) has noted,

the continuity of political divides may survive the parties and politicians who articulate them for electoral purposes. Constrained by the stakes of the political field they enter, parties will most likely put forth political agendas with a track record of splitting and mobilizing the electorate, ensuring continuity for the divide. It would therefore seem that, even in the absence of a booming civil society or of a crystallized party system as stabilizing forces, we cannot write off the emergence of cleavages.

Kitschelt *et al.* (1999:64-79) have provided the most influential account of the political divides for which we can identify a social basis[26]. Firstly, they name a (political) regime divide with fault lines between supporters and opponents of the communist regime, proving more durable in countries where the regime was particularly repressive. Secondly, they predict an economic-distributive divide between winners and losers of market reforms. Thirdly, they expect a socio-cultural divide between libertarianism and authoritarianism. Other possible divides could be ethnic – in countries with large ethnic minorities, such as Romania, Slovakia or the Baltic nations –, or national-cosmopolitan, where younger, better educated cohorts profess cosmopolitanism and older, less educated cohorts lean towards nationalism. It is important to note that divides may be "perfectly collinear", that is, they can become subsumed to each other (Kitschelt *et al*. 1999:70). As I will claim, their 'freezing' into a single cleavage occurs precisely through the work of political articulation, one that ensures the sustained supply of social, organizational and ideational resources.

[26] A mere nine years into the systemic change, it seemed appropriate to elide the language of cleavages and instead speak of divides.

Some authors have pointed to the regime divide as the most constant of the aforementioned divisions throughout the region, providing a sustainable voter appeal (Haughton 2014:225) that may crystallize into a cleavage. Scholars generally describe regime divides as pitting supporters and opponents of the old regime,[27] not just in Eastern Europe but also frequently in South America (see Torcal and Mainwaring 2003). While some have argued this divide could lose salience as direct memories of the communist era recede, one regional study by Whitefield and Rohrschneider has shown a trend towards increasing salience of the communist past from 2003 to 2007 (2009:676) which, as I will show later, may be related to the appearance of concrete mechanisms to socialize voters into a memory cleavage.

The idea that the regime divide may constitute a memory cleavage has not been clearly formulated, as various authors offer contrasting definitions of cleavages and disagree over the adroitness of techniques to measure them. Nonetheless, I will argue that even sticking to the classical and strictest definition of cleavage advanced by Bartolini and Mair – which requires a socio-structural basis, an associated identity and an organizational manifestation for its emergence – there is sufficient evidence to claim the regime divide has fully articulated into a memory cleavage. If we wished to make this definition even stricter, and identify a critical juncture to which we can associate path dependent effects on cleavage formation as a fourth pre-requisite, we would still find support for treating the divide as a cleavage.

But to begin fathoming how the conservative identity politics of anti-communism came to shape political competition in durable and adaptive ways, a brief sketch of the genesis and structure of

[27] This conceptualization of the sides composing the divide may not do justice to the attitudes of its social base since, as the previous chapter has shown, communist nostalgia does not correlate neatly with support for the old regime.

post-communist political fields is of essence. Early accounts of post-communist politics predicted it would be dominated by the former communist nomenklatura (Staniszkis 1991; Hankiss 1990), who had successfully converted (communist-era) political capital to (post-communist) economic capital in order to establish itself as a new, domestic capitalist class. While this well-argued account quickly gained popular currency, Eyal et al (1998) later showed that such domestic bourgeoisie never emerged, let alone from the ranks of the former communist bureaucratic elite. Instead, they concluded the great beneficiaries of the transition have been the former communist technocracy, whose power derives not from ownership, but rather from their post-communist adaptation to the roles of experts and managers. The main implication, with regards to the development of the post-communist field of politics, was that different forms of cultural capital regained the dominant role they had traditionally enjoyed in the region, and that taken in isolation, the political capital of communism was a handicap, rather than an asset. Their logic was the following: Communist-era political capital, defined as a highly institutionalized form of social capital, was useless unless accompanied by the education and skills - cultural capital - that can be redeployed under market conditions. The latter was precisely the case of the former communist technocracy, who by virtue of its familiarity with the intricacies of the transitional economy, possessed much sought-after knowledge of market opportunities in the present. Only under such conditions could their former political capital be turned into informal social networks in capitalism. Conversely, the old bureaucratic elite, lacking the education and skills to adapt to a capitalist economy, could not offer useful assets to the emerging power elite and thus embarked on a downwards social trajectory (1998:14-15, 34-35).

Rejected in the first democratic elections of the 1990s and cast into the role of "communists" by the former dissident intellectuals, the technocracy would become the belated winner of transition.

The immediate winners were however the former dissidents, many of whom were endowed with cultural capital, but of a different kind. Just as the technocracy, they could also present at times impressive educational credentials, but they were rather grounded in the humanities and the social sciences. In many countries, they were eventually forced into an uneasy compromise with the technocratic class, with whom they formed a new power block, either in alliance or through a relatively civilized alternation of power. (Eyal et al 1998:47). This alliance would be highly consequential to the future development of post-communist political fields, particularly to the principles of distribution of the symbolic capita of anti-communism and their correlation to articulatory power.

There are reasons to believe several consequences of these early political dynamics on have proven relatively durable. Namely, Zarycki (2009) has argued for the continued relevance of cultural capital's prominent role in shaping the composition of polish elite, although he highlights how cultural capital's different manifestations – including informal ones – are consequential to field positions. In the case of Hungary, Kristóf (2012) has shown that said positions, at least in the case of the Hungarian political elite, remain relatively stable. While the 1990s had been a period typified by elite circulation, it has been followed by protracted political elite stagnation, a finding that mirrors widespread perceptions that politics in the region are still dominated by the same familiar faces of the turbulent 1990s.

While this chapter does not claim to provide an updated and comprehensive assessment of the post-communist power elite, in much of Central and Eastern Europe the key development seems to be a shift in the internal balance of forces rather than an overhaul in its composition. The parties of the former technocracy in Poland and Hungary are in a prolonged crisis: The Hungarian socialists seem unable to re-emerge from their post-2010 marginalization, and the Polish socialists

have virtually disappeared. Through their compromises and proximity to the technocrats, liberal dissidents have also tainted their reputation as anti-communists. Those compromises allowed liberal dissidents to take possession of many of the resources in the cultural field, such as newspapers, publishers and other media, which, coupled to their greater international projection and prestige, as well as their impeccable intellectual credentials, brewed resentment among their conservative dissident peers.

Among conservatives, whose cultural capital credentials have rarely matched those of the left and of the liberal intelligentsia, the counter-strategy has consisted of constructing their political trajectories as unpolluted by compromises with communists, allowing them to carve out a monopoly on the symbolic capital of anti-communism. Put differently, conservative dissident intellectuals rely on the symbolic capital of anti-communism to validate their more modest cultural capital and to maintain its access to political capital. This symbolic capital, based on public claims to uncompromising anti-communist stances before *and* after the transition to capitalism, may warrant an ability to manipulate political identities if, and only if voters perceive their claims to moral authority as credible, and the new political identities as culturally and historically resonant. Ultimately, the realignment of political elites in Hungary and Poland signals that the division pitting technocrats and dissidents is no longer necessary, and that it can be easily replaced by one that cuts across dissident traditions, dividing its liberal and conservative strains, or forcing the former to concede symbolic hegemony to the latter, as was the case in the Czech Republic, where Havel ended up subscribing to conservative dissident anti-communism. It also indicates that the principal structuring axes of political fields are organized around cultural and symbolic capital – these provide the main sources for generating durable forms of political capital.

In what follows, I assess the formation of a memory cleavage on the four dimensions defined above – critical juncture, socio-structural basis, collective identity and organizational manifestation – and trace it back to the structure of post-communist political fields, particularly to the possession of anti-communist symbolic capital. Through this exercise, I emphasize the strategic role played by conservative attempts to monopolize this capital, one that has allowed its representatives to embark in an ascendant political trajectory, particularly in Poland and Hungary. On a broader level, by positing the ubiquity of a memory cleavage in the region, one whose emergence doesn't immediately transpire from the social structure, I demonstrate the far-reaching influence of political articulation in shaping political competition in durable ways.

### a) Critical Juncture:

The regime divide has been described as a the most immediate consequence of regime change for political competition, a sort of "initiatory matrix of political life" and "the axis around which the initial constellation of the party spectrum was created" (Hlousek and Kopeček 2008:520). During founding moments such as those that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall an incipient political field stabilizes around a few issues that that determine the ideological fractures of the political field. As actors strive for political power, they gain an understanding of their position in the field in relation to that of potential allies and opponents, which ultimately determines which divisions elites politicize or foreground, setting a template for the party system's future configuration (Zielinski 2002:185). This would, according to Bornschier (2009:5) elevate regime change to the sort of critical juncture that, by coinciding with the establishment of new parties, can leave a permanent imprint on the party system and thus play an important role in structuring a cleavage. The obvious parallel is to Lipset and Rokkan's argument, positing that contemporary party systems had 'frozen' around the cleavages that were dominant when universal suffrage was introduced in the 1920s. It

would therefore be theoretically fitting for post-communist party systems to similarly 'freeze' the dominant divisions of the transition into a memory cleavage.

Models of cleavage formation predominantly based on regime – or other – legacies have provided powerful insights: Most prominently Kitschelt *et al*. (1999) elaborated a threefold typology of party system development that claimed to explain, among other puzzles, the varying relevance of the regime divide across the region in accordance with regime-types (national-accommodative, bureaucratic-authoritarian and patrimonial). Yet this model has since proven more adept at predicting the short-term evolution of political divides than the emergence of more durable political cleavages (Haughton 2014:218; Rivera 1996; Whitefield 2002:194). Part of the problem is that, as has been noted, many scholars fail to invoke the path-dependent mechanisms involved in reproducing particular legacies – taking for granted historical and cultural legacies without providing an account of how they come to bear on present events (Whitefield 2002:191; De Leon *et al.* 2009:194; Hanley *et al*. 2008:421, 423). For critical junctures to engender such path-dependent effects one has therefore to provide an account of the continuous political articulation of the cleavage to which they give rise.

Yet if we take a step back, the more general hypothesis that the 1989 critical juncture engendered a regime divide remains valid. Regime legacies are indispensable to accounting for the field constraints and opportunities with which actors later grapple in their efforts to articulate political divides. For the specifics of our case, it becomes relevant to ask what constraints and opportunities regime change occasions on actors navigating the political field. As I have shown in greater detail in the previous chapter, the first post-communist elections posed a historic challenge for opponents of the regime, one of winning the election and relegating the regime to the dustbin of history. In what was a common trajectory of democratic transitions, election campaigning placed an almost

exclusive stress on the rejection of the past, by which local politicians competed to represent an "anti-communist national interest" (Verdery 1996:90), with quite successful results, as the generalized ousting of communist parties showed. Predicated on the collapse of an unpopular regime and later on its successful outing, the reshuffled political field was structured along an anti-communist/post-communist ideological divide, with dissidents standing at the anti-communist end of the pole as national saviors and communist-era cadres at the opposite one as oppressors and collaborators. This "initiatory matrix" of political life therefore rested on actors' credible claims to possess the symbolic capital of anti-communism, whether on merit of actual or claimed dissidence. Yet while the structuring of the field around actors' possession of anti-communist symbolic capital is a direct consequence of the regime change, its later path-dependent effects hinged largely on how political entrepreneurs went about articulating the regime divide and their position relative to it. This is relevant in two senses: (1) political entrepreneurs deployed anti-communist symbolic capital for legitimating and de-legitimating claims to the right to exercise power by other actors navigating the field, which translates into its possessors having an ability to boost or weaken the value or legitimacy of specific forms of cultural capital; (2) the logic for the distribution of this symbolic capital was vulnerable to assail by political entrepreneurs, and therefore its custody oftentimes remained up for grabs before a regime divide could stabilize.

With regards to the first point, and as was mentioned in the previous section, the positions of post-communist elites within the political field were not merely defined by their symbolic capital, but also by cultural capital. Precisely those less endowed with symbolic capital, the former communist-era state managers and technocrats, were able to maintain their grip on power via accumulatio of a form of technocratic and managerial expertise that was highly valued in post-communism. In the absence of an indigenous capitalist class, these managers monopolized the power to make

investment decisions that were crucial to redefining the post-communist economic and political landscape (Eyal *et al.* 1997:70 1998). However, holders of anti-communist symbolic capital could construe the possession of technocratic cultural capital as both an asset and a liability. Unlike high-ranking communist cadres, the managerial class had maintained a more ambiguous relationship to the regime: invisible and relatively apolitical under state socialism, political expediency and the need for symbolic legitimacy commanded their choice of political affiliation in post-communism. On many occasions, those in possession of anti-communist symbolic capital willingly legitimated their rule. Namely, the Czech Civic Democrats, a pro-market conservative party populated by the regime's former technocratic class, was by 1992 the dominant anti-communist force and, thanks to the blessing or toleration of dissidents, had successfully remained untainted by the communist past. As a result, the former technocracy has generally not been the target of anti-communism over the last decades, with politician such as former Czech prime-minister and President Václav Klaus construing themselves as "internally exiled". By contrast in Hungary, where the communist-era technocratic class remained in the Socialist Party, a substantial community of conservative dissidents deployed the symbolic capital of anti-communism to de-legitimize the left on merit of personnel continuities. This was not an obvious outcome during the second democratic election, when the party of the liberal dissident intelligentsia, the Free Democrats, entered into an alliance with the Socialists in what constituted a validation of the rule of the managerial class. However, this surprising coalition opened up an opportunity for conservative dissidence, increasingly concentrated in the liberal-turned-nationalist Fidesz Party, to claim a monopoly on the symbolic capital of anti-communism, and adopt a successful, long-term strategy of de-legitimation of the entire left. In their worldview, the Socialists remained communists, whereas the liberals, many of them the sons and daughters of former cadres, were complicit in the mistakes committed by

socialists (Enyedi 2016:213). In a story that echoes the Polish experience, such complicity jeopardized the privileged position of liberal dissident intellectuals: They possessed impressive educational credentials and a respected intellectual output, at times even internationally, when compared to the more modest cultural capital of conservative dissidents. They had also been prominent opposition figures under communism, typically outshining conservative dissidents, and thus possessed impeccable symbolic credentials. Their pragmatism and flexibility, however, provided easy targets for their former conservative allies, who could question the moral legitimacy on which their symbolic capital rested.

What these brief examples show is that the historical juncture of 1989 expressed itself in the field's organization around an anti-communist/post-communist divide, one that short of elevating anti-communist capital to the status of definitive determinant of power, did assign to it the function of a potent arbiter of the legitimacy of power claims. In terms of the opportunities and constraints of the political field, this was significant to the extent that holders of anti-communist capital were endowed with greater articulatory power, that is, they had the authority to sanction certain ideological combinations and political alliances while suppressing others. Poland is instructive in this sense: right wing-parties who promoted a radical and increasingly painful economic reform had the articulatory power to form value-based divides "fundamentally structured by interpretations of the transition histories" in order to counter deepening socioeconomic divisions (Powers and Cox 1997:617). A pervasive ideology of antisocialism coincided with a political focus on the goals of the liberal intelligentsia – back then 'unpolluted' by compromises - and a relinquishing of socio-economic aspirations even among trade unions. The right tentatively channeled economic discontent, inevitably coupled with its painful economic reforms, towards noneconomic dimensions such as religion or nationalism (Ost 2005:181). Such examples are not

meant to imply that the managerial class's cultural capital was any less significant in forging alliances, and certainly technocratic expertise was a much sought-after asset following the defeat of communist parties in the first elections. The point is simply that the specificity of the symbolic capital of anti-communism lies in a (de)legitimizing power that bestows it articulatory properties. Moreover, once the incipient political field is structured by at least one form of capital that grants greater agency to one side of the divide, the incentives for stabilizing it into a cleavage are substantial, as reflected by the efforts described further ahead.

### b) Socio-structural basis:

The social-structural bases for regime divides differ across countries, but the various accounts of this cleavage in the region seem to indicate that there are various potential sources of stabilization in the social structure for it. This social basis can be variously found in citizens' location in the "socio-political networks of party and mass organizations", their economic position within the regime, or their possible experience of repression under communism (Kitschelt *et al*. 1999:64), although it has also been noted this basis may be unstable as the divide has a strong attitudinal basis, and attitudes towards communism are often conflicted (Toole 2007:560).

However, the collapsing of different divides into a single one warrants more stable social bases. In this respect, the Czech example is illuminating: Its political field has produced an overlapping economic and regime divide, opposing winners and losers of the transition process. The winners are those, typically younger, who can more easily acquire the education and skills necessary to thrive in an increasingly deregulated market economy, whereas the losers tend to lack such skills and opportunities: that is, they are those for whom it is too difficult to acquire the necessary dispositions to function in a market economy, and hence will seek to maintain some of the state protections enjoyed under the communist regime. Cohort effects are prominent not just in

distributing economic skills, but also on value commitments variously inculcated under communist or liberal democratic regimes (Evans 2006:263). Therefore, the articulation of the combined economic/regime divide sees a particular set of attitudes towards the past correlate with one's position in the post-communist economic structure, economic winners being prone to adopt uncompromising anti-communist stances.

A similar argument can be made with regards to the small Baltic countries, where the memory of communism has rather been studied as a foreign policy tool for newly independent states that emerged from decades of Soviet subjugation. Estonia and Latvia in particular, while lacking post-communist successor parties, have inherited a large ethnic Russian population that opposes the official anti-communist state narratives endorsed by the titular nationalities. Estonian and Latvian left of center parties are marginal and communist successor parties did not even survive in some cases, as much of the public associated left-wing ideologies not just with the communist past, but with Russian occupation (Saarts 2016:116, 123, 135). Consequently, the role traditionally reserved for socialist or social-democratic parties in Central and Eastern Europe has been assigned to parties that draw votes from ethnic Russians. Estonia's largest left-wing party has been persistently targeted by accusations of Russian and Communist sympathies (Mikkel 2006), as has Latvia's (Auers 2013), whereas ethnic Russians remain severely under-represented in public institutions and decision-making bodies (Pettai and Hallik 2002). In sum, Latvian and Estonian political entrepreneurs effectively articulated a merger between the ethnic and the regime divides (Saarts 2016), providing anti-communism with a stable ethnic basis.

Elsewhere regime divides are generally linked to other value-based divides, but this is not necessarily symptomatic of an absence of socio-structural bases: rather, it should serve as an invitation to understand the complex socio-economic roots of those collective identities. In the

next section, I provide a fuller account of how these identities are made up of bundled ideological alignments that coalesce diverse social bases into a powerful collective identity.

### c) Collective Identity:

A quick survey of the principal political divisions across post-communist Europe would show anti-communism among the most prominent and regionally transversal collective identities available, one so malleable that we can find it associated with a variety of liberal and conservative ideologies. As was claimed above, the legacy of regime change helped elevate anti-communist capital to the status of ultimate symbolic arbiter of competing claims to power. However, most scholarship on cleavages has measured the significance of the regime divide mostly in terms of its manifestation in salient issues such as lustration or decommunization (Bértoa 2014:28). I argue this underestimates its significance. In fact, anti-communism's mobilization potential can easily go beyond the issues most blatantly identified with the defunct regime, such as the fate of former communist officials. The miscalculation of the weight of the past is part of a larger problematic trend that seeks to decipher party ideologies through content analyses of manifestos or expert judgements. These traditional methodological approaches are inadequate for measuring anti-communism as official manifestos will not necessarily mention this ideological dimension. As Enyedi (2008:296) points out, anti-communism became "an important political weapon many years after the fall of communism" due to its ability to associate itself with "contemporary political divisions", and should be instead grasped via analyzing discourses, self-labeling and coalition preferences (Enyedi 2005:701-2).

A few works on the Czech Republic can help illustrate the perils of underestimating the broader competitive significance of anti-communism. Kitschelt *et al*. (1999) have described the left-right divide in Czech lands as predominantly economic, pitting winners and loser of the transition,

although they recognize it coincides with a regime divide of lesser import. Others have acknowledged an increased significance of the regime divide starting only in 2005, when the Czech social democrats, institutionally unrelated to the former ruling party, showed openness to engage in political collaboration with the unreformed Communists. The mere suggestion of an ad-hoc leftist alliance driven by programmatic proximity (Kopeček and Pseja 2008:335) caused an escalation in anti-communist rhetoric that helped engross the dividing line between, on the one hand, Christian-Democratic and Liberal-Conservative parties and, on the other, Social Democrats and unreformed Communists (Bértoa 2014:25). These studies are largely compatible with research that shows the regime divide is generally the dimension of political competition characterized by more shifts in salience (Whitefield and Rohrschneider 2009:678), that is, an expression of occasional outbursts of political acrimony around issues such as lustration or elections, rather than a cleavage.

However, a more discursive assessment of Czech political dynamics reveals the perils of treating deeply bundled divides as essentially discrete phenomena. Discourses can reveal the manner in which seemingly bounded ideological packages are actually embedded in other social, cultural and economic categories that orient the worldview of voters. In the Czech instance, the association between the economic and memory divides is in a sense, a discursive legacy of the defunct regime: Czechoslovakia stood out among the state socialist countries for the extent to which authorities abolished the private sector and pursued an egalitarian income policy, making social equality a particularly important aspect of the ruling ideology even by regional standards. Thus, it was no surprise that the introduction of a market economy would come with justification that was not only pragmatic, but also ideological. Together with democracy and pluralism, "the market was an integral part of the package of ideological notions" and "'civilizing mechanisms' that had been

allegedly destroyed under socialism" (Holy 1996:150-153), acting as a symbol of rationality and of a return to the natural versus the artificial order imposed by socialism. Former Czechoslovak Prime-Minister and Czech President Václav Klaus, the country's key economic reformer and a member of the former communist technocracy, explained the need to adopt "an economic system which is characteristic of the civilized world" as part of his country's “return to Europe” (cited in Holy 1996:151). Meanwhile, the left’s resilient welfarism, construed as revealing of their true, 'nostalgic' sympathies, was often grounds for de-legitimation: As Eyal notes, the right quickly dismissed “any attempt to add some adjectives to the market economy as synonymous with restoring communism” (2003:153). Meanwhile, the Social Democratic Party (CSSD) became the dominant force on the left by the late 1990s and the Czech right had to relocate the perceived threat from the unreformed communists onto them (Williams *et al*. 2005:30). Given that the CSSD and the old ruling party were unrelated, save for some older members involved in the Prague Spring reform movement of 1968[28] (Kopeček and Pseja 2008:329), holders of anti-communist capital could deploy the prevailing cognitive associations between economic ideology and attitudes towards communism as a strategy of de-legitimation. In fact, the eventual normalization of communist successor parties by the mid-1990s generally forced their opponents to similarly reconstruct the “communist threat” not merely on merit of presumed continuities of personnel, but also of an enduring communist ‘ethos’ that they linked to contemporary issues such as corruption (Zhurzhenko 2007:3).

Hungary was home to an even more convoluted process of ideological bundling, largely produced by Fidesz, a party emerging from the anti-communist dissident movement and which has shifted

[28] In what is known as the Prague Spring of 1968, the Soviet Union put down a socialist reform movement that was peacefully unfolding in communist Czechoslovakia and which sought to institute a “socialism with a human face”.

its ideology on practically every key issue except one: anti-Communism. The first democratic elections showed two important competing divides, cosmopolitan liberals vs nationalist conservative, and anti-communists vs communist-forgiving (Enyedi 2005:702), with a strong association between the nationalist conservative and anti-communist ideologies. However, this would change in 1994 when SZDSZ, a small liberal party with hitherto impeccable anti-communist credentials and with a pro-market agenda, formed a coalition with the reformed Socialists, the winning political force, in order to make it into the governing coalition. Up to this election Fidesz had styled itself first as left-libertarian and soon after had begun shifting rightwards, advocating monetary rigor and joining the Liberal International. Yet by refusing to take part in the Socialist-liberal governing coalition in 1994, Fidesz did something more: it made an unprecedented and principled statement that gained it the monopoly on the symbolic capital of anti-communism. Simultaneously, it dealt a blow to the liberal dissidents of the SZDSZ who had betrayed the anti-communist national interest, but it also gradually carved itself a space previously occupied by other anti-communist nationalist forces on the right. Emboldened by this newly gained capital, Fidesz leaders felt they now possessed sufficient articulatory power to produce a risky rightwards shift: The party began toning its liberalism down while gradually adopting more nationalistic and Christian themes. By the late 1990s Fidesz had become the unquestionably dominant force of the anti-communist side of the political field, having completely abandoned their own earlier cosmopolitanism and anti-clericalism. Moreover, the party now proudly boasted a rigid stance which excluded any kind of compromise with the left, fracturing the political field by attacking anyone who entertained the possibility of cooperation with the left (Enyedi 2005:703-4). Fidesz thus erected a political trench by merging previous divides into a single, ideologically powerful cleavage, in which cosmopolitan liberals and socialists favor a pragmatic approach towards the

past whereas nationalists and conservatives advocate an uncompromising anti-communism and see the liberals as complicit with the old regime (Enyedi 2016:213).

In sum, Fidesz's strategic monopolization of symbolic capital helped craft a powerful identity that transcended direct appeals to experiences of oppression or socio-economic position in the past regime. Instead, it was intentionally bundled up with nationalist and conservative ideologies, in the process feeding off the socio-structural bases – such as Religious voters – of their corresponding divides. As is still the case in the Czech Republic, Hungarian anti-communism was initially liberal, but gradually its elites turned it into a token of conservatism as in Poland.

An important lesson here is that it makes little sense to treat the regime divide as occasionally coinciding with other divides, with the implication that memory merely has sudden outbursts of relevance, only to subsequently retreat to dormancy. Instead, anti-communism is more correctly grasped as a collective identity whose precise articulation hinges on the priorities and stakes of the political field: Estonian political entrepreneurs had to grapple with how to deploy memory in a struggle to de-legitimize a once dominant Russian ethnicity that represented a perceived threat to their independence. They did so by associating left-wing agendas with a foreign menace and collapsing the ethnic and regime divides into a powerful memory cleavage; Czech political entrepreneurs inherited a strong emphasis on equality and, particularly following Czechoslovakia's dissolution in 1993, found a way to entangle market radicalism with anti-communism in order to de-legitimate resistance to radical market reforms. This overlapping of the regime and economic divides allowed the emergence of a strong and unidimensional left-right cleavage, whose social-structural basis lies in the economic position of voters (winners or losers of the transition) and its ideological expression in attitudes towards the communist regime; Fidesz in Hungary provides the most compelling evidence of the power of political articulation, in that it

got both its alliances and their timing right to produce an ideological overhaul that only preserved its anti-communism. While clearly capable of shaping the political field, Fidesz's ultimate coupling of nationalism with anti-communism was no innovation, since previously other parties had shown the political field could accommodate such an ideological association. Fidesz was however capable of enlarging this subspace by skillfully requisitioning for itself the symbolic capital of anti-communism. This was no small deed if put in the context of another less successful example: Solidarity's ideological eclecticism, once it became a dominant Polish party, had as its single unifying ideal a nostalgic anti-communism (Hanley *et al*. 2008:428), for which there was no lack of symbolic capital. Yet its ideological shifts and contradictions were never truly resolved, prompting its disintegration as a political force and the dissipation of its anti-communist capital.

As I pointed out above, the discursive malleability of anti-communism is crucial to building encompassing collective identities: It ensures the durability of the divide by furnishing it with various potential sources of sustenance in the social structure that we typically associate to other – economic, ethnic, or religious – identities. But for this work of association to be both effective and durable, that is, for it to manifest itself as a political cleavage, it requires the mobilization of socialization mechanisms (Toka 1998:35) that govern the relations between the political field and other social arenas. A prominent gap in post-communist cleavage research has been precisely the inability to identify an organizational expression that would justify the use of the term cleavage. It is this gap that we now fill.

### d) Organizational Manifestation:

This dimension of cleavage politics has received little attention outside the strictly political realm – generally in parties or trade unions. One exception has been Enyedi's work on Fidesz, which describes its efforts to stabilize the cleavage by providing it with a solid organizational basis deeply

embedded in the country's social fabric. The now dominant nationalist-conservative party placed great emphasis on creating right-wing umbrella organizations such as societies of conservative professors, think tanks, media organizations and in wooing 1956 veteran organizations. Most crucially, Fidesz encouraged the setup of 10,000 so-called Civic Circles across Hungary, which operated as a counter-civil society that put pressure on the left through political – organized protests and petitions – and non-political activities – fundraising, charity, blood donations, cultural events (Enyedi 2005:708-9). In this manner, Fidesz ensured a broad alliance of diverse social groups united by an anti-communist political identity.

Enyedi's account points the way for further research. It shows that while, indeed, we must begin looking for an organizational basis from within the political field, namely in political parties (Bértoa 2014), cleavages will also be anchored in the broader social structure within which the political field embedded. This is simply an unavoidable aspect of their articulation: the establishment of links between collective identities and social bases is mediated by an institutional apparatus that can facilitate a flow of discursive cues and political signals between elites and voters located outside the field. Moreover, in a context of party volatility such as that of many post-communist polities, a cleavage's societal embeddedness will manifest itself in organizations that, while securing the cleavage, can survive the political parties that establish it in the first place.

Memory institutes fulfill precisely these conditions. These hybrid bodies, largely lead by and staffed with sympathetic historians, are tasked with establishing an official narrative of the past and covet a monopoly on communist-era archives. Scholars are called upon to diffuse their scholarly output, largely based on archival research, outside the strictly academic realm, instilling an anti-communist identity through a variety of public education practices. Memory institutes found opponents in diverse quarters. Particularly left-wing parties, but also many in the media,

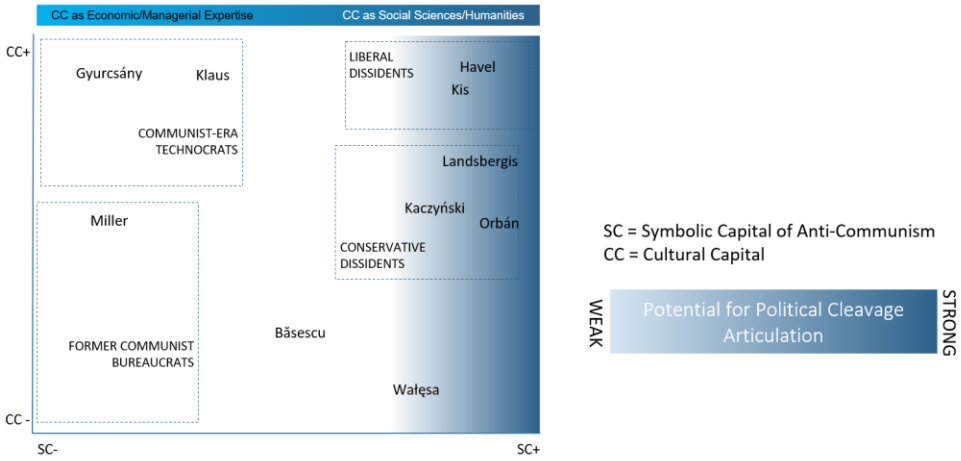
saw these institutes as ideologically motivated and unnecessary even before their creation (M. Tomšič, pers. comm., November 2012). In Poland, the main liberal daily Gazeta Wyborcza and many in the former liberal dissident communities, such as Adam Michnik, criticized the establishment of the IPN. Typically, they feared the Institute would turn into an instrument of revenge against representatives of the former regime, and that the unreliable, often forged documents of the security apparatus would be used to persecute innocent people (P. Machcewicz, pers. comm., March 2013). The passing of time has done little to change these perceptions, particularly among critical historians. Institutes are regularly perceived as an attempt by the right to deploy anti-communism to "stigmatize anything bound to redistribution or leftist politics" (M. Pullmann, pers. comm., December 2012), or as sending an implicit message to the electorate that "if you don't vote for us the danger is we'll go back to communism" (M. Spurný, pers. comm., December 2012).[29] As Romanian historian Florin Abraham puts it with regards to his country's memory institute, its creation constituted "an attempt to capture anti-communist discourse in Romania, to demonstrate that liberals are the only, single anticommunist party in Romania, and that others are neo-communist or authoritarian" (F. Abraham, pers.comm., February 2013).

Such beliefs largely respond to memory institute's employment of an easily politicized anti-totalitarian framework that is attuned with the conservative dissident tradition. The theory of totalitarianism has a long history of political mobilization in the Cold War, when Western elites marshalled it to depict Communism as a menace to liberty comparable to Nazism (Engerman 2009; Fitzpatrick 2007). Before the appearance of memory institutes, a community of less prominent

[29] Göran Lindblad, a Swedish liberal-conservative politician who presides over the Platform of European Memory and Conscience, the umbrella organization for memory institutes, did his part to link communism to social-democratic agendas by arguing "different elements of communist ideology such as equality or social justice still seduce many" (Milne 2006).

dissidents reignited its usage, and has since provided a good fit for the political imperatives of the post-communist right. It sustains depictions of Communism as indivisible in time and space and raises public attention towards the many resilient elements of post-communism that are in some way enmeshed with the old regime. The linkage to the present is made by evoking an encompassing and ongoing "communist threat" that consists of hidden networks of former communists allegedly accumulating exorbitant power and wealth.

*Figure 3: Post-Communist Political Fields and Cleavages*




| CLEAVAGES (NON-EXHAUSTIVE) | CLEAVAGE COMPONENTS (NON-EXHAUSTIVE) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Cleavage Dimension** | **Social Base** | **Collective Identity** | **Organizational Expression** | **Critical Juncture** |
| **HUNGARY** | Anti-Communist + Nationalist | Religious, Rural | Nationalist AC | Terror House | 1989 |
| **POLAND** | AC + Religious + Nationalist | Religious, Rural | Nat. and Clerical AC | IPN | 1989 |
| **CZECH REPUBLIC** | Anti-Communist + Pro Market | Transition Winners | Neoliberal AC | USTR | 1990 |
| **BALTIC STATES** | Anti-Communist + Ethnic | Titular Nationality | Nationalist AC | International Commissions | 1992 |

## 4. Communist Threat

During the aftermath of the 2010 Hungarian election, the newly elected Prime-Minister Viktor Orbán promised to rid the country of its "Stalinist" constitution. Politicians from his party (Fidesz) considered that Hungary's supreme law, adopted in 1949 during the years of Stalinism, was a centerpiece of the communist leftovers supposedly persisting in the country, despite constitutional revisions in 1950 1953 1954 1972 1983 and, most notably 1989 and 1990. The political

implications of the new constitution, approved in 2012, went far beyond the political symbolism of breaking with an irredeemable and immutable communist past: a constitutional amendment to the new document lists the crimes committed by communist party officials during the socialist period, extending the statute of limitations for these crimes and naming the former communist party a criminal organization. The document defines the Socialist Party as the legal successor of the communist party and therefore responsible for the aforementioned "communist crimes"[30].

Romania provides another vivid sketch of how communism was reconstrued as a present threat. Liberal-conservative President Traian Băsescu entrusted a group of dissidents and liberal historians with disseminating an equivalent account of "communist threat" through the publication of the so-called *Tismaneanu report.* A former low-ranking member of the communist apparatus that had recently refashioned himself as a mnemonic warrior, Băsescu saw the 700-page report as an opportunity to condemn communism on a scientific basis (Cesereanu 2008:271). It was not the first such commission in Romania, since his predecessor and honorary leader of the Social Democratic Party Ion Iliescu had set-up an International Commission for the Study of the Holocaust in Romania (ICSHR) in 2003, staffed with historians and sociologists, as part of informal Western expectations to come to terms with Romania's role in the Holocaust. As Romania prepared to join the EU in 2007, the political left had also made calls for a Reconciliation Commission to bring all sides in a joint assessment of the communist regime. However, anti-communists had rejected these calls as attempts to derail potential investigations into revolutionary violence, and instead opted for creating a commission of the "morally credible" headed by

[30] The text names the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSZMP), its legal predecessors, and political organizations associated to it as criminal in nature, whereas it indicts the Hungarian Socialist Party as its successor: "[H]eirs to unlawfully accumulated wealth, organizations which emerged as legal successors to the MSZMP during the democratic transition also share the responsibility of their predecessors." (cited from Balogh 2013)

Romanian-American political scientist Vladimir Tismaneanu (Mark 2010:37). Unlike the Holocaust commission, Băsescu's initiative aroused public debate and controversy, particularly as he presented the finalized report in front of a Parliament in which one third of the deputies had occupied important posts under the communist regime (Ciobanu 2009:333). The report singled out former President Iliescu with no less than 28 references, pointing to his past in the Communist-era elite and his alleged collaboration with the Securitate[31]. This despite the left's esteem for his role in democratizing Romania in the 1990s and for his marginalization at the hands of the regime due to his reformist leanings in the 1970s. Crucially, the commission decided to venture into interpretations of the revolution's aftermath, accusing Iliescu of "cultivating methods similar to those practiced by communists, the demonization of civil society and democratic parties, symbolic manipulation, unscrupulous propaganda … to strangle the frail pluralism born on December 1989" (cf Hogea 2010:23). This narrative choice indicated the commissioners' wish to "emphasize that the Communist period had continued after its official collapse and that 'perpetrators' had remained within the system" while framing the present as a battle "between ex-Communists and 'true revolutionary forces'" (Mark 2010:44).

The notion of "communist threat" found continuity in memory institutes and is a prominent theme among its leadership. Writing on the same year as his appointment as President of the Scientific Council of Romania's memory institute, Tismaneanu claimed Romanian media was "controlled by oligarchic trusts with strong connections to the *ancien régime* and its antipluralist successor" and "viciously besmirched pro-Western, liberal, antitotalitarian intellectuals," (2010:131). Lukasz Michalski, former Deputy Director of the Public Education Office at the IPN similarly claims that

[31] Romania's notorious communist-era Secret Police that included one of the largest networks of collaborators –half a million in a country of 22 million – in Eastern Europe.

"communists, and I mean communists, are still a very influential group in all of our countries. They didn't vanish, they didn't disappear." In Poland in particular, Michalski claims "there are branches of the economy that are stuffed with former secret service officials: the banking system, telecommunications, energy transfer (…) they have influence in the media, newspapers, it is difficult to fight it" (Ł. Michalski, pers. comm., January 2013). A similar assessment is shared by the head of Slovenia's memory institute, who claims "more than 80 percent of the communist elite remains in its post, there was no break in the political, economic and historiographic establishment" (A. Valič Zver, pers. comm., November 2012). The Director of the Platform of European Memory and Conscience, an umbrella organization for memory institutes, has no qualms in claiming Communists have found their way up to European institutions: "People who committed … [communist crimes] might also be in public office in European Institutions, our [Czech] commissioners are communists that we send to Brussels, they are members of the former communist party …. It's not the past, it's the present" (N. Winkelmann, pers. comm., December 2012).

These narratives were not built out of thin air, but rather sustained on genuine popular resentment with the transition years, during which the groups that took most advantage of market reforms were generally well-off under socialism (Ost 1993:469; Holy 1996:163) – albeit, in Central and Eastern Europe at least, there is no support for the thesis of nomenklatura takeover (Eyal, Szelenyi and Townsley 1998). Yet, in the Baltic region a slightly different "Communist threat" prevails, one posed by an authoritarian Russian 'other', but also by the parties representing ethnic Russian minorities whose patriotic and democratic commitment the majority ethnic group regularly questions. More broadly, mnemonic warriors are concerned with a "creeping Soviet mentality" (V. Nollendorfs, pers. comm., January 2013) and "mental schemes" that epitomize an "illness that

we should overcome" and that endangers "the normal development of society and of Europe" (R. Račinskas, pers. comm., January 2013). Right-wing parties have therefore been able to accumulate a "symbolic capital" in accordance with claims "that they were protecting a glorious and traumatic past" (M. Tamm, pers. comm., January 2013). Worries regarding a Russian threat, regularly expressed in elections, are compounded by the realization that Russian speakers inhabit a separate public information sphere, and more recently by Russia's annexation of Crimea. History has thus provided an important battleground for relations with Russia, which the Baltic countries deploy to rally international support. As Valters Nollendorfs, External Affairs Director of the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia explains: "Russia continues its propaganda campaign to characterize the Baltics as fascist countries, instead of countries that wanted to reassert their independence. Without a question, this reflects a broader geopolitical struggle. They do want to take care of their countrymen abroad, and one of the methods is to create an impression that these states are not stable democracies" (V. Nollendorfs, pers. comm., January 2013).

The Baltic sense of vulnerability has inspired a relentless commitment to identity-building practices within memory institutes, most tellingly in a summer camp organized by the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania and titled "Postwar History for Young People." The camp seeks to "show the resistance participants' love for their homeland, and their understanding of justice, the free world and democracy" and to "to instill civic duties and patriotism in young people." But state commissions have also been at the service of more concrete state demands on Russia to provide symbolic and financial compensation for Soviet-era occupation (I. Ījabs, pers. comm., January 2013), although many consider this activity hopeless (T. Hiio, pers. comm., January 2013).

## 5. Achieving Social Closure

Unsurprisingly, the circumstances of Memory Institutes' establishment points to their articulation from the political field in general, and the anti-communist side of the regime divide in particular: Slovakia's liberal-conservative party (the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union) was behind the establishment of the Nation's Memory Institute in 2002, a month before parliamentary elections in which Prime-Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda secured his re-election. The Study Centre for National Reconciliation in Slovenia is set-up by initiative of Slovene Minister of Justice Lovro Šturm, from the liberal-conservative Slovenian Democratic Party, in May 2008, shortly before parliamentary elections which would oust his government. In Hungary, conservative Prime-Minister Viktor Orbán inaugurates the House of Terror Museum two months before the 2002 general election, in a ceremony with all the contours of a campaign speech. Despite a few more campaign actions on Museum grounds, and the creation of a well-endowed foundation to manage the museum, Orbán would lose the election to the Socialists. Finally, more attuned to the logic of Baltic political fields, Lithuania's Genocide and Resistance Research Centre is created in 1992 on the same day Lithuania's first legislative elections as an independent state were taking place, symbolizing the country's break with, and condemnation of, Soviet hegemony.

Memory institutes manage the connection between the political field and the wider social arena, vital to cleavage institutionalization. Most prominently, but not exclusively, this occurs by luring scholars, granting them privileged access to archival sources, and redirecting their output towards public education practices. Among these we find campaigns, petitions, media interventions, public speeches and talks, secondary and higher education textbooks, exhibits, conferences and award ceremonies. Activities in the realm of secondary education are particularly prominent, and involve "methodological" training for history teachers, curricula development, or the sharing of textbooks

(R. Račinskas, pers. comm., January 2013). By way of illustration, the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile produced the country's first high-school textbook dedicated to the teaching of communist history (See Figure 1)[32], and is an optional teaching aid in the last two years of high school (Tismaneanu 2015:183). Likewise, the Czech Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes engages in professional co-operation with schools, attracting some 1000 teachers interested in methodological advice (P. Žáček, pers. comm., December 2012). Exhibits can achieve similar purposes, most prominently the Terror House, which has turned into a popular destination for schoolchildren to get acquainted with Hungary's communist experience, generally neglected in school curricula (Balogh 2013).

[32]The cover of the textbook produced by Romania's IICMER reproduces the totalitarian imagery of a master of puppets commanding every single movement of a helpless folk.

*Figure 4: Textbook aid developed by Romania's memory institute*


The involvement of memory institutes goes well beyond the production of electoral cues through public education activities, and often sees them embroiled in political and judicial controversies that attract the media spotlight. For instance, the Nation's Memory Institute in Slovakia, while having difficulties in obtaining all the secret police files requested for its activities, was responsible for releasing tens of thousands of names of collaborators while cooperating in the prosecution of crimes committed under fascist and communist regimes. As recently as 2013 the Institute did not shy away from intervening in political life, submitting a proposal –welcomed by both Parliament and the Government – to tax the pensions of former secret service officials and distribute the

revenue among victims of the communist regime. Romania's memory institute has also styled itself as an arm of prosecutorial authorities, and retains the right to issue penal notifications to the relevant inquiry bodies for crimes committed during the communist period. Under this provision, prosecutors and other competent personnel can carry out their investigations within the Institute. It has moreover successfully cooperated with former Minister of Justice Monica Macovei to lift the statute of limitations for crimes concerning genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. The move created a legal basis for the prosecution of crimes committed under the communist regime and the memory institute assisted her in drafting and promoting the legislation (Tismaneanu 2015:183).

The largest such institute in the region, the IPN in Poland, is unmatched in terms of the controversies involving its role in public life, particularly following the victory of the conservative Law and Justice Party in the 2005 elections. The incoming cabinet replaced Its former directorate and purged all central positions, while Janusz Kurtyka, a man who towed the government's line, was selected as the new head. The activities of the institute began receiving even more generous financing, turning it into one of the better-endowed state institutions and one of the most respected ones among the rightist public and politicians. As part of the government's promise to finally rid the country of resilient and corrupt communist networks, the Institute pushed for a radical lustration law that was supported by all parties –liberals included – except the left. The process would have required 700,000 people to submit declarations on whether they had cooperated with the secret police during communism, but in May 2007, two months after the law's parliamentary approval, the Constitutional Court ruled large parts of the amended law unconstitutional. This did

not prevent the IPN from producing a bestselling monograph the following year[33], in which two of its historians purported to demonstrate Lech Wałęsa, one of the region's most prominent dissidents, had been a communist secret agent. The monograph describes six years (1970-6) of his life as a secret police collaborator while working at the Gdansk Shipyard from where the anti-communist Solidarity trade union movement emerged. Wałęsa, a respected figure among the center-left, denied the accusation and claimed it was based on communist-era forgeries (Nalepa 2010:230-1).

## 6. A Puzzling Resilience

By institutionalizing an official version of the past that coincides with the discourses of the post-communist right, memory institutes have bestowed upon it a durable symbolic advantage that tilts the political field in their favor. Yet this assertion raises an important question: If memory institutes antagonize political opponents, why hasn't a single one of them been scratched? After all, the opposition should have an interest in subverting one of the principal closure mechanisms for a cleavage that plays to its disadvantage.

An important layer of resilience is one that typifies any official body: their deep entanglement with the state. State agencies may frequently require reports, information and assessments from memory institutes. In the Czech case, its memory institute has a privileged legal position as a partner for the finance ministry, the government, and for parliament when funds are allocated for the fiscal year (P. Žáček, pers. comm., December 2012). But the primary source of resistance is to be found in the broader social forces evoked by the notion of "communist threat", by which the left remains vulnerable to the de-legitimizing properties of anti-communist symbolic capital. Any attempt to

[33] The book, titled *The Secret Police and Lech Walesa: A Biographical Addendum*, was written by IPN historians Sławomir Cenckiewicz and Piotr Gontarczyk.

shut down organizations self-designated as centers for the scientific investigation and revelation of communist crimes would most likely lead to accusations of concealing past crimes for political purposes. For instance, Schmidt is confident her Terror House is impervious to political shifts precisely on this basis: "130.000 people came to the opening of the Terror House, if they try to overhaul it or close it down then they will have again 130.000 or more come here, and they [the leftists] do not want that, because anyway they have a legitimation problem."[34] (M. Schmidt, pers. comm., May 2013)

Hostile governments have instead adopted strategies of damage control via sympathetic higher-level appointments or merely by reducing the funding, and by extension the public impact, of memory institutes (Ł. Michalski, pers. comm., January 2013). Political rows will invariably follow, as with the ousting of the director of the Czech memory institute Daniel Herman. The change in leadership occurred in early 2013, a few months after the Social Democrats had won a majority in the Senate, responsible for appointing the institute's director. Conservative Prime-Minister Petr Nečas swiftly mobilized the theme of "communist threat" by accusing the Social Democrats of paving the way for a coalition with unreformed Communists who would penetrate the state: "The goal is to eliminate the [Security Services Archive] as a barrier to a massive infiltration of the future state administration by Communist candidates", Nečas claimed (B.C. 2013). The leadership change went ahead, and the Institute has since overhauled its image, considerably toning down the language of totalitarianism. However, it is doubtful a socialist successor party – which, exceptionally for the region, the Czech Social Democratic Party is not – would get away with a similar move: Schmidt's certainty, expressed above, is also grounded on experience: In 2003, the

[34] Michalski makes a similar point with regards to the IPN in Poland: "they would have to pass a law, which cannot be done quietly." (Ł. Michalski, pers. comm., January 2013)

Hungarian socialists and liberals, fiercely critical of the Terror House, contemplated the idea of changing the museum's name or altering the exhibition's content, but ultimately opted for slashing its funding by 40 percent. Schmidt responded by threatening to close the museum, a prospect that Socialist Prime-Minister Péter Medgyessy feared would lead to his downfall. Medgyessy reduced the slash to a mere 10 percent and made an official visit to the museum that many saw as a legitimation of the institution. The socialists would remain eight years in power without ever intervening in the composition of the board of the Foundation to which the Museum belongs (Hamvay 2015), reflective of the catch-22 situation they faced. Interference could potentially produce a damaging backlash with immediate political consequences. Passivity, on the other hand, allowed the build-up of an anti-socialist symbolic repertoire with unpredictable long-term consequences. As is often the case in politics, the short-term perspective prevailed.

## 7. Conclusion

On all four dimensions of a cleavage – socio-structural basis, collective identity, organizational manifestation and critical juncture – I have found grounds for claiming what has been classically considered a regime divide should be instead categorized as a memory cleavage. This is significant in a variety of ways: (1) it draws attention to a deeper embedding of memory in the structuring of political fields and the dynamics of political competition that occur within it; (2) the appearance of these cleavages across the region, despite significantly different structural bases across countries, underscores the centrality of political articulation in crafting them. A recombinant anti-communist identity successfully subsumed the regime divide with parallel ideological divides, continuously ensuring social bases for the cleavage; (3) memory institutes fulfill the role of providing social closure for the memory cleavage, a dimension of their activity hitherto ignored by the literature on post-communist politics. This institutional apparatus, located at the intersection

of the political and academic fields, therefore oversees the flow of electoral cues between the political field and voters; (4) Crucially for the struggles of the political field, memory institutes allow politicians to control the principles of distribution of anti-communist symbolic capital, while legitimating it as stored and systematized outside the political field. If hitherto this symbolic capital was up for grabs in the political field, and the principles of its distribution remained open to challenge, the creation of memory institutes represents an endeavor to stabilize this distribution on putative scientific principles. At the same time, the continuing relevance of the past is discursively propped up by an official anti-totalitarian discourse that makes socialist parties complicit in the dangers posed by an inherited "communist threat".

Next, I turn to one of the principal arenas from where the post-communist right accumulates resources for this purpose, the field of historiography. Who are memory institute historians exactly, how are they lured into this mnemonic role, what sort of encounter between the political and the scholarly fields do they represent, and how do they reconcile their profession and skills with the demands of a hybrid body that traverses multiple fields?

# CHAPTER 4: HISTORIOGRAPHIC STRUGGLES UNDER ANTI-COMMUNIST NATIONAL RENEWAL

The events of 1989 saw historians take part in the exponential growth of public debates on recent history, competing or aligning with the views of politicians, pundits and other social scientists who usually framed their positions in terms of repressed collective memories – of a kidnapped Central Europe, of occupation, of struggle against totalitarianism – released from the chains of communist ideology. But outside the public sphere a less visible, yet critical reconfiguration of post-communist historiography was taking place with consequences both for incipient political identities and the public framing of communist history. This realignment was as much a source as a manifestation of broader political struggles over the assessment of communism, and was similarly expressed in terms of explicit or implicit support and opposition for the totalitarian paradigm.

This chapter will follow the configuration and evolution of the region's historiographical field from the vantage point of the interactions between the political field and the historiography of communism. I show that it is at their intersection that memory institutes rise as the principal site for the production of post-communist memory. I begin with a historical overview of scholarly struggles around the concept of totalitarianism to highlight how their latest post-communist incarnation has rehashed not just many of the arguments, but also the deeper structural divisions that underpin them. Following Bourdieu's description of the academic field (1984:73-127), I conceptualize these divisions as grounded in the accumulation of relevant forms of capital. The possession of scientific capital determines the first axis, measurable in the recognition of peers, publications in international and high-ranking journals, monographs published, their overall

reception in the scholarly community, and their professional immersion in prestigious academic communities. These were the dimensions post-communist historiographic experts mentioned more frequently to rank the quality, promise and prestige of individual scholars, without significant signs of disagreement among them. The second axis, which may or may not be a consequence of the former, concerns academic capital, relevant to controlling access to the corps through supervision, evaluations and tenure procedures. Academic power is highly dependent on networking activities and tends to be correlated with age, but its relationship to scientific capital is less straight-forward. In a perfectly meritocratic historiographic field, this correlation should be strong, but when other, less institutionalized forms of capital – such as social, economic or political - intervene this association weakens.

This is precisely the case with post-communist historiographic fields, and hence my analysis[35] introduces a third axis around competence capital, one that expresses the field's refraction of the symbolic meta-capital of anti-communism. The term competence denotes willingness to integrate the networks that constitute the anti-totalitarian regime of remembrance, deploying one's intellectual abilities in an effort to secure the overall coherence of the political identities of conservative dissidence. It reflects a continuing alignment with the political zeitgeist of the 1990s, by which public intellectuals were expected to contribute to the reformulation of national identities that have turned increasingly partisan with time. But unlike public intellectuals who are in the limelight, holders of competence capital can anonymously contribute to this task by virtue of their mere belonging to a broader network. By sustaining a regime of remembrance they see themselves as providing a valuable and visible public service, even when doing so from a position of

[35] To allow for fluidity, I will often refer to the field of communist historiography merely as the historiographic field.

invisibility. Such *therapeutic* historians (Kopeček 2008:6), whom I define in greater detail below, provide this service within the pressures of the historiographic field, constantly reconciling them with the professional expectations emanating from the political field, and learning to navigate the liminal position they inhabit. In this manner competence capital is accumulated, a process that tells a larger story of historiography's highly subordinate status in the field of power, and of the potential for subversion of academic priorities normally associated with social scientific fields.

## 1. A Brief History of the Totalitarian Framework

The totalitarian thesis has roots quite removed from the Central and Eastern European region to which scholars and politicians have more insistently applied the term. The term first appears in a speech by Benito Mussolini in which he announced his Fascist Party's ambition to control all aspects of social life in Italy, while its first prominent articulation in a liberal democracy is tied to the enunciation of the Truman doctrine in 1947. In it, US President Harry Truman asked Congress to approve an aid package to Greece and Turkey as a response to the expansion of "totalitarian regimes" (the Soviet Union) in Europe. Among scholars the first to seriously engage with the concept were intellectuals from the left-wing Frankfurt School who used it to critique certain aspects of Western capitalism (Engerman. 2009:206). During the 1950s and 1960s Western-based scholars reformulated the theory to turn it into the dominant paradigm in assessing communist and fascist regimes. The works of Hannah Arendt and Zbigniew Brzezinski were landmarks of this period and have remained influential to this day, particularly for scholars who place great weight on the coercive and oppressive aspects of communist regimes. Indeed, Arendt and Brzezinski depicted totalitarian power through powerful states bent on institutionalizing terror through the ubiquitous deployment of the Secret Police against their subjects. Arendt's work identified only Stalinist Russia and Nazi Germany as belonging to the totalitarian category, although as several

authors have noted, she had little experience or evidence to back her descriptions of the Soviet Union. Brzezinski, on the other hand, improved some of Arendt's shortcomings by paying more attention to the actual functioning of fascist and communist regimes, ultimately claiming they were fundamentally, although not completely, alike (Iordachi 2009).

Prominent historians such as Robert Pipes, Robert Conquest and François Furet further elaborated the standard view of totalitarianism through an oeuvre that encouraged analogies with the Nazi regime – as did many Cold War-era western politicians – and depicted Soviet power as a practical translation of Marxist-Leninist ideology (Fitzpatrick 2007:80). Yet the theory was also increasingly the object of academic criticism that went beyond reproaches for its ideologically charged nature. Beginning in the 1960s, North American and Western European scholars who had spent time in communist countries were mounting a serious challenge against the totalitarian framework. They criticized the paradigm for failing to capture the evolutionary dynamics of the regimes in question and for placing excessive stress on ideologies, leaders and political regimes at the expense of the deeper socio-economic roots of communist rule. This new generation of social and cultural historians and anthropologists, which referenced its field experience to legitimate its scientific pedigree, increasingly called attention to the complex nature of Soviet society. Besides emphasizing the relative freedom of action of various social or professional subgroups, they also pointed to previously unnoticed forms of mobilization, consensus-building and legitimation among populations held to be completely submissive by totalitarian scholars (Iordachi 2009). Older, better established historians who belonged to the totalitarian-model scholarship – the holders of academic capital – accused the young revisionists of being "whitewashers and fellow-travelers who were "soft on communism"" and whose "wish to switch the focus of scholarly attention away from terror" amounted to "attempts to justify and give legitimacy to the Soviet

system" (Fitzpatrick 2007:81). Nevertheless, by the late 1970s academic capital was gradually transferring to younger cohorts, and totalitarianism had retreated into a marginal position in all the social sciences (Engerman 2009:232).

The end of the Cold War brought momentous changes to the historiography of communism. Post-communist elites declassified several previously restricted archives that provided detailed accounts of the repressive apparatuses of the communist state, and many seized the opportunity to revitalize totalitarian theory. The publication of the *Black Book of Communism*, and specifically Stephan Courtois's widely read introduction, would bring the most notorious exposition of a renewed totalitarian paradigm. Crucially for post-communism, Courtois made several points later taken up by mnemonic warriors in Central and Eastern Europe: (1) Nazism and Communism are two variants of totalitarianism, but we know little about communism even though it killed four times more people (100 million against Nazism's 25 million victims); (2) The book seeks to "focus on crime as a defining characteristic of the Communist system throughout its existence" (Courtois 1999:3), an emphasis widely mentioned in memory institutes' mission statements and in declarations by mnemonic warriors; (3) Archival and witness sources prove "conclusively that terror has always been one of the basic ingredients of modern communism" (1999:3), a statement that has inspired post-communist historians' belief that archives hold the key to assessing communist regimes; (4) Communism is indirectly responsible for the excesses of Nazism: "The methods implemented by Lenin and perfected by Stalin and their henchmen bring to mind the methods used by the Nazis, but most often this is because the latter adopted the techniques developed by the former" (1999:15); (5) The lines between memory and history can and should be blurred: Courtois presents the *Black Book of Communism* as both "memorial and history"

(1999:28); (6) calls for a Nuremberg tribunal for the crimes of communism, a demand that post-communist mnemonic warriors have insistently formulated at the EU-level.

The *Black Book of Communism* received public, but not academic acclaim. By the time it had been published, most of the revisionists of the 1970s had managed to convert their scientific capital into academic capital, imposing a new paradigm of social history that proved resilient against attempts to bring totalitarianism back into the academic mainstream. A number of specialized journals and scholars levelled several critiques that echoed the arguments of revisionist historians in the 1960s and 1970s. A review in the Journal of American History cautioned that the "*Black Book* fails to provide the reader with a sense of how communism captured the popular support of millions of people around the world" (Maddock 2001:1156). Similarly, the Journal of Interdisciplinary History lamented how "the authors tend to exempt from examination certain segments of societies in the evolution and application of communist terror, even those with well-documented roles" and claimed the book's writing and methodology resemble communism's "basic tenets" (Weiner 2002:451-2). Courtois' introduction moreover put him at odds with some of his own contributors who had preferred eliding comparisons with Nazism. Nicolas Werth, author of a chapter on Russia, sparked a heated debate in France after accusing Courtois of being obsessed with arriving to the round number of one hundred million victims of communism: for that he inflated figures, including by misquoting Werth's chapter to add an extra five million to the overall death toll in the Soviet Union (Wiener 2012:41). American Historian and Soviet Union specialist Arch Getty likewise noted methodological shortcomings in the book, arguing half of the alleged one hundred million victims of famines had perished as a result of "the stupidity and incompetence of the regime", which should not be "equated with the deliberate gassing of Jews". Another significant portion,

Getty claimed, originated from "excess mortality" caused by poor nutrition and inadequate medical care, not intentional murder (Getty 2000).

These widely shared criticisms did little to prevent the immediate politicization of the *Black Book of Communism*, and political elites on the right used its argument for communism's indivisibility to extend responsibility for "communist crimes" to sections of the European left (Morgan 2010:66). For instance, conservative Deputies in the French National Assembly waved copies of the book while attacking Socialist Prime-Minister Lionel Jospin over his coalition with the "unrepentant" Communist party (Golsan 2004:XIII). Post-communist elites were also quick to seize the opportunity. As early as 2000 an Estonian version of the book was published with a preface by President Lennart Meri, whereas Prime-Minister (and Historian) Mart Laar wrote an additional 80-page chapter titled *Estonia and Communism*. The President presented the book's Estonian edition in Tallinn's Town Hall, using the opportunity to insist right and left-wing extremism are "two sides of the same medal" (Estonian Presidency 2000).

The Estonian example is extreme, but the anti-totalitarian framework had been brewing within the various strains of anti-communist dissidence that evolved throughout much of the region beginning in the 1970s. Dissidents, many of whom social scientists by formation, were divided between liberals and conservatives. The common struggle against the dictatorship and the need to counter state propaganda glossed over divisions between the liberal sectors who advocated a doctrine of human and civil rights, consensual politics and civic patriotism and the more conservative dissidents who privileged an ethnic understanding of the nation and used a supposed "national memory" as a narrative to lure broader sectors of society (Kopeček 2012:590).

Those who identified with the liberal left deployed the term with a more activist than intellectual intent, precisely at a time when the theory was under fire in the West. They identified in totalitarianism a malleable concept that could be adapted to various roles in local and international arenas. Domestically, describing the communist regimes as "totalitarian" helped draw a clear line between its supporters and opponents and mobilize the population via binary oppositions such as "us" vs. "them," "truth" vs. "lies" or "democracy" vs. "totalitarianism" (Kopeček 2012:594). Conservative dissidents, on the other hand, took these divisions for granted although they were more marginal to the movement. In international circles, the term was equally useful at a time when Western politicians showed growing willingness to engage with Eastern European leaders, guided by a belief that communist regimes had embarked on the path of reform and could be treated as rational partners. Brier (2011) notes dissidents such as Adam Michnik feared that such coziness, particularly from the Western left, came at the expense of sustenance for independent social organizations. Many dissident intellectuals were aware of the poor fit between the reality of East European societies and totalitarian theory, but argued the term helped convey the origins of state socialism and its continuing desire to control all aspects of everyday life. If this "totalitarian spirit" could no longer materialize, they argued, this was attributable to the opposition of independent social groups (204). Dissidents therefore strategically deployed the term "totalitarianism" when encountering Western politicians: Aware of its connotations with Nazism, totalitarianism effectively conveyed a negative assessment of state socialism to German interlocutors. Similarly, the emergence of an unorthodox French left that denounced the Soviet Union as totalitarian allowed dissidents to exploit the term to transmit their concerns to the French public (206-12).

Carried over by the many dissidents/social scientists, the totalitarian framework naturally came to embed the language of much post-communist historiography, although the sudden opening of

several archival sources containing detailed descriptions of the repressive communist apparatus also played a large role in revitalizing the theory. In Hungary, as in most of the region, most historians still follow at least some tenets of totalitarian theory by maintaining a sharp distinction between state and society, providing historical accounts largely driven by party politics, elite discourses, diplomacy and political decisions in the face of an oppressed mass (Trencsényi and Apor 2007:53-54). The totalitarian paradigm also feeds on its unreflective usage, even among scholars who recognize progression and differentiation in communist regimes, as is the case in the Czech Republic (M. Kopeček, pers.comm., December 2012). In the Baltics, it is invoked "emotionally" and without considering relevant theoretical debates that occurred in the West, having become synonymous with dictatorship (I. Ījabs, pers. comm., January 2013). If anything, historians driven by the terminology will pay lip service to Hannah Arendt's 'The Origins of Totalitarianism' (Abraham 2011:112-3) or to the work of Zbigniew Brzezinski, but without showing any awareness of the crucial historiographical debates that followed or preceded their publications. Prestigious historians who seriously engage with the concept will normally reserve it for descriptions of the Stalinist era[36] – a position that, in countries such as Czech Republic, Poland or Lithuania, clashes with that of a substantial group of historians who sees the entire communist period as totalitarian (Górny 2007:126; D. Staliūnas, pers. comm., January 2013). Nonetheless, this second stance is coming out of fashion, and in places where it had widespread currency it increasingly implies totalitarian "ambitions" rather than oppression (M. Pullmann, pers.

[36] János Rainer, director of one of the main centers of research on communist history, the Institute for the History of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, embraces such an approach. A member of the older generation, he takes the Stalinist era as representing an ideal type of totalitarian regime, and goes on to argue that the post-1956 regime of János Kádár in Hungary was post-totalitarian – in line with the definition favored by liberal dissidents -, in the sense that totalitarian institutional structures persist but their actual political and social manifestations are different (F. Laczó, pers. comm., May 2013).

comm., December 2012). The greatest exception is perhaps Slovenia, a former Yugoslav Republic that endured a more popular, sovereign and less repressive regime. Here the term was always politically and academically controversial, and only a minority of scholars use it (M. Tomšič, pers. comm., November 2012). In what follows, I will show that these fracture lines have roots in the deeper and comparable sociological divisions observable across the region's historiographic fields, exhibiting a striking resemblance to Cold War era debates in both argumentation and actor-constellations.

## 2. Post-Communist Historiography

I define totalitarianism's contemporary Central and Eastern European incarnation as a series of postulates about communism that may be summarized as follows: (1) terror is a central feature of communist regimes and ideologies; (2) this terror is ubiquitously incarnated by the activities of the secret police, limiting the potential for resistance and autonomous action; (3) the pervasiveness of oppression excuses the population for failing to mount a sustained opposition to the regime; (4) communism is an external imposition contrary to national traditions; (5) a stark line separates state and society as well as victims and perpetrators; (6) communism is structurally akin to Nazism. This framework found varying degrees of endorsement in the historiographies of the region, although often implicitly, as a scholarly refraction of the prevailing political atmosphere of the 1990s.

Hungary was among the most reformist regimes since the 1960s, and its relative openness to non-dogmatic social scientific research explains a considerable institutional and scholarly continuity. Like other countries in the region, the central institution for pre-1989 historical research, the Historical Institute of the Academy of Sciences, lost importance and financing to universities, but there was no comprehensive personnel overhaul (Trencsényi and Apor 2007:8). In terms of

individual scholars, the initial attitude towards researching the socialist past was one of rejection of all communist era scholarship. This period saw the rise of a substantial group of right-wing historians intent on restoring national pride, depicting "Hungarian history as a general success-story occasionally interrupted by … intrusions from "outside"" (45), but many also successfully kept "some kind of unspoken post-Marxist model of explanation" or, alternatively, sought to implement new frameworks (10-11). Overall, political historians operating under nation-centric approaches remain the most important and influential scholars of communism (F. Laczó, pers. comm., May 2013), affecting many social historians who emulate them in pitting ruling elites against the oppressed masses (Trencsényi and Apor 2007:53). These "local eminences" are more likely to consider post-1945 events as the beginning of a process of 'Sovietization' rather than modernization, setting communism against Hungarian historical traditions. Social historians will instead lean towards interpreting post-war social transformations as an unavoidable result of the modernization process, signaling one-party rule as an unnecessary excess of this process (52).

Polish historiography comes the closest to the Hungarian model, since it was similarly able to maintain an active and relatively autonomous historiographic field during communism: all periods, except recent history, were de-politicized, while there was also considerable methodological freedom and contacts with the West. With the regime change, there was a growth in universities and students, but not in professors, who tend to accumulate an exorbitant amount of posts to the detriment of their scholarly output. Universities had few resources to finance research, leaving scholars with limited choices – mainly domestic and foreign foundations that restrict thematic diversity through their funding priorities. As in the rest of the region, and despite an opening in opportunities for innovation, there was a more thematic than methodological influx, particularly in areas concerned with recent history (Górny 2007:101-5). However, as the largest post-

communist country, Poland has become home to the most diverse and decentralized historiographic scene, with many scholars establishing networks with English, German and French-speaking scholars (M. Górny, pers. comm., January 2013). The Institute of History at the University of Warsaw has been another source of innovation, showing exceptional openness to social and cultural history and promoting the rise of several younger scholars (P. Apor, pers. comm., May 2013)[37].

Czech historiography provides some contrast to the Polish and Hungarian situation: Personnel changes were substantial, especially among those focusing on recent history, with a large influx of previously exiled historians who fled after Soviet troops invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968[38]. Having played a pivotal role in the reformist Communist movement leading up to it, exiled historians became key figures of the Czechoslovak opposition movement, and emerging political elites rewarded them with prestigious posts in post-communism. Many found positions at the new and well-financed Institute of Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences, from where they could affect the reform of the historiographic field[39]. The research agenda of these political

[37] This notable development is largely attributed to the unusual receptiveness of 20th century historian Marcin Kula, who has promoted the ascent of young historians in his institute. Despite belonging to the otherwise nation-centric generation of older historians, Kula is well integrated in contemporary international networks and favorable to more recent historiographical trends (P. Apor, pers. comm., May 2013).

[38] In what came to be known as the Prague Spring of 1968, the Soviet Union put down a peaceful reform movement that sought to establish a "socialism with a human face" in Czechoslovakia.

[39] Vilém Prečan's biography epitomizes the post-communist compensation of academics who had amassed anti-communist capital and a public intellectual profile. Prečan worked between 1957 and 1970 at the Historical Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences but lost his job due to his involvement in the 1968 Prague Spring. He spent the subsequent years doing menial jobs such as cleaner or warehouse assistant, although he kept publishing in exile and in clandestine publications. In 1976, he emigrates to Germany and resumes his activities as a historian. Upon his return to Czechoslovakia in 1990 he founds the Institute of Contemporary History and becomes its director until 1998. President Václav Havel awarded Prečan with the Order of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, which honors outstanding contributions to the development of democracy, humanity and human rights. To this day he retains various posts in Czech academia, and most notably becomes a member of the scientific council of the Czech memory institute in 2013.

historians largely reflected the dominant climate in early 1990s Czech society, falling under the sway of a simplified concept of totalitarianism and generally narrowing available themes and questions (Kolar and Kopeček 2007:179, 201, 218). Czech historians failed to bring about methodological innovation and pluralism, partly due to the virulence of anti-communist sentiment: While the Marxist paradigm remains a serious alternative in medieval and early-modern research, scholars of modern history have dismissed it as mere ideology, an accusation extended to novel historiographical approaches they perceive as "covert" expressions of Marxism (Kopeček 2008:81). Overall, history remains tenaciously nation-centric, and relies on a positivistic, fact-collecting and descriptive paradigm, which stresses notions of absolute truth and imbues research with moralistic undertones.

Romanian historiography was also actively engaged in the identity-building efforts of the 1990s, but inherited a particularly challenging intellectual tradition that personally affected many scholars: Romania's communism was indebted to pre-communist nationalist ideology and was thus hardly sustained on terror alone. The relationship of Romanian intellectuals to the national question is particularly strong, and communism did nothing to revert this tendency, on the contrary: Romanian intellectuals rallied around the regime in the 1960s, supporting its determination to go at it alone within the communist bloc. This was not a consequence of their commitment to the regime or to communist ideals, but rather part of a strategic calculation that allowed intellectuals to integrate into the regime's structures (Verdery 1991). The community of scholars compromised by complicity with the regime was gradually marginalized in post-communism and replaced by historians who had focused on less politically sensitive periods during the previous regime (Petrescu and Petrescu 2007:353). An ongoing dialogue between local historians and Romanian scholars living abroad, many of whom operated in disciplines other than

sociology, served as entry point for many Western trends and facilitated an influx of liberal historians into the field. For instance, US-based political scientist Vladimir Tismaneanu was instrumental in the development of the country's historiography owing to his interpretation of Romanian communism as a variant of "National-Stalinism" (See Tismaneanu 2003). However, post-communist historiography has mostly consisted of diaries, memoirs, oral history interviews or assortments of documents, revealing a lack of know-how in the treatment of sources, little interest in theoretical and methodological issues, and an inclination for event-based political history (Petrescu and Petrescu 2007:319, 365, 370-1). Save for a few younger scholars writing from abroad, most of the local historiographic community continues to embrace a reactive anti-communism and a crude positivism that treats evidence unproblematically (Abraham 2011:106-7). As a result, Romanian historians tend to explain the long-term survival of the communist regime by emphasizing the brutality of police methods and systematically omitting "the legitimate sources of power, their movements, and their evolutions" (Laignel-Lavastine 2004:162).

The political shaping of the historiographic field was nowhere more potent than in the Baltics, where historians took it upon themselves to rewrite history textbooks from a nationalistic point of view. EU and NATO informal requirements to come to terms with the legacy of the Holocaust[40] would come to clash with Ethno-nationalist exaltation and in 1998 Baltic countries agreed to set up state commissions to investigate communist and Nazi crimes. The commissions persuaded several international personalities to supervise the work of local scholars, as the prevailing international perception was that Baltic historians lacked neutrality to approach the subject (M. Tamm, pers. comm., January 2013). However, in Estonia foreign supervision was provided not by

[40] During the German occupation of the Baltic states (1941-44) many locals actively took part in pogroms and killings of Jews, particularly in Lithuania and Latvia, where about 90 percent of the Jewish population was exterminated.

historians, but by political and civic personalities from Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Russia and the US (Pettai 2011:267). The resulting commission materials consisted mostly of fact-collection based on archival research, doing little to subvert the dominant narrative of local victimhood and reinforcing local historians' belief in Nazi-Communist equivalence (M. Tamm, pers. comm., January 2013). The materials have moreover entered school and university curricula and, partly as a result of this, younger historians continue to be predominantly interested in the history of "terror" (K. Brüggemann, pers. comm., January 2013). Lastly, the commission published its work in English, ultimately serving the purpose of legitimating the Nazi-Communist comparison to foreign audiences. In Latvia, foreign scholars formally supervised the commission's output, but rather superficially. Their suggestions were "tolerated rather than appreciated" and they were "kept at arm's length", according to Latvian historian Valters Nollendorfs (Pettai 2011:266). In Lithuania, foreign scholars became significantly more involved in the research and publication of reports dealing with the Nazi occupation, but the assessment of the Soviet occupation was again left to local historians. In sum, the commissions strengthened a national perspective "while seeking the international (Western) stamp of approval" to prevent future frictions with Western observers (Pettai 2011:266-8). To this end, Baltic States honoring of renowned historians whose perception of World War II coincides with the state's narrative is quite telling (M. Tamm, pers. comm., January 2013): Estonian Presidents have awarded the Estonian Cross of Terra Mariana, a state award given to foreigners who have rendered special services to the country, to Anne Applebaum, Robert Conquest, Stephane Courtois and Timothy Snyder, all of them prominent endorsers of the totalitarian framework. Following the same logic, Lithuania has awarded Applebaum with the Lithuanian Millennium Star and Snyder with the Lithuanian Diplomacy Star. The commissions were however effective in fomenting acknowledgment of a local role in the Holocaust, albeit many

historians will emphasize their countries didn't exist as independent states at the time, that locals were manipulated by German propaganda (I. Īļabs, pers. comm., January 2013), or that they constituted a small, non-representative minority (V. Nollendorfs, pers. comm., January 2013).

Methodologically, communist historiography continues to include a large community of historians that embraces a crudely positivistic, ethno-nationalist or patriotic approach to history (I. Īļabs, pers. comm., January 2013), in contrast to younger historians who are internationally connected and attuned to methodological innovations. For instance, "the idea that the truth about the past can be established once and for all" continues to dominate Baltic historiography (Pettai 2011:271) and particularly Latvian historians tend to believe their country's historical uniqueness makes comparative efforts futile (264). As elsewhere in the region, historians who took part in the nation-building efforts of the 1990s occupy most prominent academic positions, but their relative youth makes their grip on academic capital more durable. The situation is particularly severe in Latvia where comprehensive standards of quality measurements are lacking and conservative academic institutions can marginalize younger scholars or foreigners (I. Īļabs, pers. comm., January 2013)[41]. Estonia, on the other hand, is a positive exception in that it ensures a transparent system of funding and employment opportunities, and promotes publications in international, peer-reviewed journals (Pettai 2011:275).

Finally, the unique transition of East Germany, absorbed by its Western neighbor, provides an insightful alternative: Initial circumstances were in many ways similar to the rest of Central Europe, but historiographies eventually took a divergent path owing to the prevalence of several,

[41] "Latvia is the only country in the region that doesn't accept any usual criteria like quotation indexes, publications in peer reviewed journals, monographs in English, etc." (I. Īļabs, pers. comm., January 2013).

well-funded and independent research centers. The line of totalitarianism-inspired historiography enjoyed the support of East German dissidents and West German conservative historians, thus enjoying a revival of sorts. The fall of the Berlin wall and the opening of the Stasi archives aroused enormous interests from judges, journalists, historians and the public. Among them, those keener on accessing the files and who published their results sooner were generally those aligned to the theory of totalitarianism and Nazi-Communist comparisons. These researchers made little effort to distinguish between diverse periods within state socialism and explained the regime almost exclusively in terms of its repressive features and of the political and ideological dynamics of the Communist Party. However, the creation of various specialized and well-funded research institutes in the 1990s brought substantial methodological innovations. While the heads of these research institutes, as well as most influential historians, are overwhelmingly from West Germany, there was a concerted attempt to reunite the narratives of West and East German historians and to invite comparative perspectives (François 2004).

This overview of various national historiographies invites a few considerations. There are important differences among them that seemingly correlate with the repressive nature of the previous regime and proximity to Soviet power. Nation-centric approaches appear to be the strongest in the Baltic countries that formerly belonged to the Soviet Union, and where historians have been pivotal in reformulating emergent national identities in co-operation with political elites – or as members of this elite, as in Estonia. Communist history is intimately tied to the burdensome legacy of the Holocaust, with totalitarianism helping to equate local victimhood at the hands of Communist regimes to Jewish victimhood at the hands of the Nazis. As a prominent historian from the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia puts it: “Nazi and Soviet crimes should be seen in the same light … The Holocaust as a mass murder should be kept as such but conditions in

concentration camps and the internal order were very similar" (V. Nollendorfs, pers. comm., January 2013).

The Czech Republic and Romania also retain a substantial community of scholars committed to nation-centric approaches, although they have become less prone to nationalist virulence. Poland and Hungary, which inherited some of the most reformist regimes in the region, did not see a complete overhaul of academic institutions and appear slightly more accommodating to novel or even Marxist approaches. These similarities are predicated upon a number of related weaknesses: After 1989, few autonomous research institutions existed that could endorse new methodologies in the face of the conservatism of mainstream national research centers, ultimately impoverishing methodological and theoretical exchanges (Kopeček 2008:80). The unprecedented opportunity to absorb new trends and influences from around the world was therefore only partly capitalized. The early overflow of paradigms, methodologies and disciplines in these reshuffled historiographic fields rather fomented an obsessive quest for an ideology-free, historical "truth", distinguishable from the "lies" of state socialism. Partly, this was a consequence of decades of limited contact with Western academics and their methodologies, as well as state socialism's imposition of a limited number of frames with which local historiographic fields could engage (Antohi 2007:XII-XIII). The availability of a fact-collecting, truth-seeking framework that seeks to correct the manipulations of the past paradoxically reproduced a tendency of communist-era scholarship: the claim to absolute objectivity. Partly driven by patriotism, but also as a reaction to the taboos of the communist era, a substantial community of scholars directed its interest to the periods of Stalinist repression and the events leading to the fall of the regime, often to underline national suffering and the heroic resistance of the population.

While younger historians, many of whom received their educations abroad, are attuned to methodological and conceptual innovations and seek to apply them to the exploration of the everyday life of communism, they remain relatively marginal. The uphill struggle they face in converting scientific to academic capital, usually held by "local eminences" who focus on political history and are rarely known abroad[42], limits their success in challenging dominant master narratives. Young historians are eventually pushed to non-academic positions in state archives or museums, or in other social science departments (P. Apor, pers. comm., May 2013).[43] There are two main reasons for this state of affairs: (1) The financial weakness of the university and research milieu aggravates the predicament of a new generation of historians by limiting the number of prestigious and rewarding posts[44]; (2) During the 1990s, the symbolic capital of anti-communism was critical to the distribution of positions within many historiographic fields. The political atmosphere of the transitional era facilitated the conversion of competence into academic capital, effectively restricting conversions from scientific to academic capital.[45]

[42] Andrzej Friszke's case is instructive of the mismatch between domestic and international recognition, typical of historians whose career began before the collapse of state socialism. Besides his membership in the Polish memory institute's board (1999-2006) and scientific council (2011-2016), Frizske is mostly known for his extensive work on Polish dissidence and opposition, and is generally regarded as the biggest authority on the subject. However, his involvement in the international academic scene is minimal and his work has been published almost exclusively in Polish.

[43] A case in point is Romanian historian Dragoş Petrescu. In spite of an impressive English-language output on the history and memory of communism, including in the Journal of Contemporary History and the Nationalities Papers, he has joined the Faculty of Political Science at the University of Bucharest rather than a proper Institute of History.

[44] Central European University in Budapest, a US-accredited institution, is an exception in that it has provided an outlet for those historians who came to maturity after 1989 and who adopt a transnational and strictly scholarly orientation. The head of its history department, Balázs Trencsényi, offers an insight into the new generation of historians: committed to transcending nation-centered frameworks via comparative research, attuned to international debates and open to methodological and conceptual innovation. He has participated and coordinated a number of international research projects, received several international fellowships and awards, and has published extensively and mostly in English.

[45] Historian Karel Kaplan provides an illustrative contrast to Trencsényi's trajectory, by which competence capital is rewarded with academic capital: Part of the generation that was professionally established during communism, his eventual victimization at the hands of communist rulers was successfully converted to academic capital in the 1990s.

Post-communist Europe is hardly exceptional in this sense. As with the Cold-war era struggles in Western academia, the prevailing political atmosphere vindicates an older generation that accumulates academic capital and more or less explicitly upholds the totalitarian framework. Opposing them is a younger generation of social historians once again entrusted with the task of deconstructing models they consider outdated and politicized. In another parallel, older historians attack younger ones on merit of political and moral criteria external to the historiographic field, as a Czech social historian notes: "Historians who try to shift the focus on cultural and social roots of the dictatorship are often criticized for their supposed amorality, for the relativization of heroes and victims, and accused of cynicism" (M. Spurný, pers. comm., December 2012).

A close observer of the post-communist historiography on state socialism, Kopeček suggests the principal fracture within its scholarly community pits two, ideal-typical camps: In the first group, we find scientifically-oriented historians, a "large, uniquely heterogeneous and uncoerced community" (2008:6) that places scientific and cognitive values above allegiance and dedication to a particular social group. One could add that within this community a relative consensus prevails that regards the role of history as one of remaining critical, aware of complexity, relativity and contextuality, while maintaining a certain wariness of tendencies to generalize and simplify[46] (Wertsch and Roediger 2008:321). Furthermore, scientifically-oriented historians take part in theoretical, conceptual and methodological debates with larger, transnational scholarly

Kaplan had taken part in the flourishing reformist movement of the Prague Spring. Writing from exile he embraced the totalitarian paradigm –without much theoretical and conceptual elaboration - to account for the communist take-over of 1948-1953, and was made responsible for reorganizing the field of historiographic research upon his return to Czechoslovakia in 1990 (Kolar and Kopeček 2007:218).

[46] I identify most of the local historians interviewed for this chapter – Péter Apor, Michal Pullmann, Ferenc Laczó, Michal Kopeček, Matej Spurný, Ivars Ījabs, Marek Tamm, Maciej Górny, and so on – as belonging to this category, although none of them made this identification explicit during the interviews.

communities, consistently making efforts to transcend parochial concerns. Finally, with regards to the totalitarian terminology, they will either avoid it altogether or define it and justify its application, mostly to the Stalinist period.

The second group is composed of "therapeutic" historians that are "clearly identifiable according to their problems and grievances" (Kopeček 2008:6) and who typically possess competence capital. Therapeutically driven narratives invert the priorities of the first community of historians, and thus will place allegiance to a specific social group above scientific and cognitive values. Hence, their aim is not necessarily the accumulation of scientific capital; rather, they see themselves as fulfilling the overpowering task of anti-communist national renewal. These historians will therefore eschew theoretical and conceptual debates and self-identify as positivists but will implicit or explicitly embrace some of the central tenets of the totalitarian paradigm, smoothly integrating themselves in the ensembles that sustain the anti-totalitarian memory regime[47].

In practice, most historians will inhabit the grey area between these two groups, the most important among them being the "local eminences" who may have impeccable professional standards and an impressive output but will not cultivate deep transnational ties and will remain susceptible to the prevailing political *zeitgeist*. Such "grey zone" historians will exhibit a penchant for political,

[47] The quintessential example, more systematically developed in the following chapter, is that of Mária Schmidt, colloquially known as the "court historian" of Hungarian Prime-Minister Viktor Orbán, the most successful mnemonic warrior in the region. Her achievements are thus not primarily related to her activities as a historian (P. Apor, pers. comm., May 2013). Within a few years of her appointment as Orbán's advisor on historical affairs in 1998, Schmidt receives her PhD in History, becomes an Associate Professor at the Institute of History of the Pázmány Péter Catholic University and assumes the leadership of the newly-established Public Foundation for the Research of Central and Eastern Europe. Through generous state funding to her foundation, she creates a number of research institutes and the House of Terror museum that become national centers for mnemonic production on communism. In great part owing to her own research institute's publishing house, her output increases dramatically, as do her articles in Hungarian media where she doesn't shy away from commenting on political affairs.

rather than social or cultural history and may implicitly adopt principles of totalitarian theory, most prominently by drawing a thick line between the state and society, and externalizing communism as alien to national traditions.[48] Their preference for the sub-discipline of political history helps explain their limited engagement with international scholarly communities, as the subdiscipline is tendentially nation-centric – much in contrast to social history, which focuses on sets of problems that allow historians to use their national cases while "translating them into transnationally relevant themes" (P. Apor, pers. comm., May 2013).

## 3. Politics of History

The post-communist temptation to politicize history is hardly unprecedented. In the nineteenth century, the role of historians was central to analyzing the past and providing the glue to holding European collective identities together. But in the West this function had been in continuous decline – at last its most overt expressions – as the bulk of historians gradually established a set of coherent academic standards and retreated from the public sphere. The post-war era marks the beginning of this process. This is a period of uninterrupted memory debates but one in which the participation of historians shrinks in the face of a flurry of activity by politicians and media actors who take it upon themselves to shape public perceptions of the past (Pakier and Stråth 2010:5). Not only have historians taken the back seat in memory building, they are increasingly expected to contribute to "the de-construction of the connected repertoire of myths" (Uhl 2010:83).

[48] A good illustration is Hungarian historian Ignác Romsics, who has published extensively, but mostly, albeit not exclusively, in Hungarian. One of his most significant contributions to the history of communism, considered outstanding and influential by his peers, provides an account of Soviet modernization that, while nuanced, portrays it at as an expression of a dictatorship alien to Central European and Hungarian historical trajectories, much in line with the prevailing political atmosphere of the 1990s. Nonetheless, this opus remains a far cry from popular conspiratorial historical narratives that see the regime as a mere imposition of the Red Army and Soviet security services (Trencsényi and Apor 2007:52-3).

In many senses, the post-communist upheavals of Central and Eastern Europe may be comparable to those of post-war Europe, when much of the continent saw the rise of new political regimes with a need to reformulate national mythologies. Particularly recent history has been affected by contemporary political struggles and demands for retroactive justice from sectors of the population and the political elite, entirely predictable in a post-transitional context. While heavily involved in the public sphere, historians' alignment with political narratives was not necessarily a political imposition. The lines between politics and academia have always been blurry in a region where many political formations emerged out of intellectual communities that included historians and sociologists (F. Laczó, pers. comm., May 2013). This phenomenon assumed unrivaled proportions in Estonia's "republic of historians", whose first democratic leadership was composed mostly of historians, including its Prime-Minister Edgar Savisaar, his successor Mart Laar (already mentioned in connection to the *Black Book of Communism*), and several other government officials and parliamentarians (Tamm 2016; Wulf and Grönholm 2008:352).

But while in the Baltic republics historiography was at the service of legitimating a freshly gained sovereignty, in Central and Eastern Europe mnemonic warriors co-opted historiography to rally the public against an internal "communist threat", producing far greater political controversy. The co-optation of historians was only one of the strategies available and throughout the 1990s political elites experimented with other measures such as lustration and restitution. Yet these modalities of anti-communism had only limited appeal to voters poignantly affected by the pressing institutional and economic reforms geared at EU and NATO membership. Ultimately, mnemonic warriors were unable to thwart the normalization of socialist successor parties, seen as responsible for the continuous presence of "communist networks" in the highest echelons of power. It is in this context

that a turn to historiographic co-optation occurs with a view on changing public perceptions of this "threat's" significance.

But what precisely was new about this approach? After all, in the first decade of transition historians did not shy away from public proclamations on the nature of the communist regime and its resilient threats, effectively becoming embroiled in political competition. They had done so as public intellectuals whose experiences of oppression – their anti-communist symbolic capital – validated their right to address the national community. However, countering the public's fatigue with memory politics seemed to require a shift away from political reliance on crude anti-communist symbolic capital. The question facing mnemonic warriors was thus how to articulate new modalities of mnemonic intervention that would make memory durable and incontestable without expressing the injunction to remember exclusively from a position of political authority. This is what memory institutes and their wide array of research and public education practices could provide.

Technologies of public intervention are complex artifacts that require alliances, compromises and material resources to ensure they acquire value as legitimate sources of information in an increasingly fragmented public sphere (Eyal and Buchholz 2010). If previous interventions placed a premium on the subjective memories and suffering of intellectuals, mnemonic warriors came to the realization that a more direct alliance with a subset of the historiographic field, formalized in memory institutes, could prove more effective. According to the terms of the new agreement, political elites sanctioned a privileged link between sympathetic scholars and the most sacred sources of knowledge of the past, secret police archives and victim testimonies. Why privileged? Archives are generally an invaluable source for empirical research but one whose access is subject to state-imposed limitations. Government priorities in granting access almost invariably take

precedence over the imperatives of independent historical research, especially when interested historians specialize on sensitive topics from recent or contemporary history. The ability to release and withhold records, to play with the timing of their release, and to select 'trustworthy' historians to analyze these documents gives governments large space of maneuver to shape history for present political purposes (Wilson 1996:17). Unsurprisingly, similar frictions played out in Central and Eastern Europe. Governments evoked security concerns or respect for international archival regulations to justify limitations on access to more recent party and secret service archives. These limitations contributed to the historiography of late communism becoming reliant on personal memoirs or journalistic accounts of many of the participants in the 1989 transformation (Antohi 2007:XV). The tendency was particularly expressive in Czechoslovakia, were a large community of exiled historians wrote based on personal experience or on sources collected during the 1960s, and interpreted the events of 1989 with similar methods. Hence much published work consisted of endless personal memoirs and journalistic accounts, rarely attempting an actual historical analysis of the communist period (Kolar and Kopeček 2007:222).

Memory Institutes therefore arise as a corrective to these limitations, providing co-opted historians with access to material evidence that scientifically validates their unearthing of collective memories of communist repression. They institutionalize a network that puts together therapeutic historians, political elites, archives and/or testimonies, and an anti-totalitarian framework, producing a regime of remembrance that corroborates the claims and positions of all elements in the alliance. The logic is circular, but effective: by granting special access to restricted sources to a select group of historians, politicians invigorate their scientific pedigree – their claim to a truthful understanding of the past – and competence capital – their claim to provide a valuable public service. Historians' access to those same sources allows them to revert the flow of legitimation

and sees them endow politicians' anti-communist discourses with a scientific credibility acquired through the political act of archival access. Historians and politicians elevate archives to the unproblematized status of a material embodiment of the former regime, while upholding through them the centrality of crimes and repression in communist rule that is so dear to the totalitarian paradigm. As I show in the next section, these linkages allow us to visualize memory institutes as operating in the liminal position between politics and academia.

## 4. Memory Institutes in the Historiographic Field

The undeniable growth in public interest for the history of communism following 1989 was as expectable as it is durable. After all, communist regimes had limited scholarly inquiry precisely into recent history, and memory institutes have often justified their emergence in terms of fulfilling a "blank in historiography" (K. Persak, pers. comm., January 2013). Notwithstanding meaningful differences between the budgets and staff of memory institutes across the region[49], scientific oriented and internationally networked historians generally view their appearance with suspicion. Memory institutes' tendency to agglomerate political, judicial, public education and research competences, to align with narratives of national re-awakening, to monopolize archives[50] and to encourage a literal reading of its archival sources has caused great concern in the community of scientific-oriented historians. Detractors have notably emphasized memory institutes' ironic continuities with the historiographical policies of state socialism, which took place through and beyond the historiographic field, violating principles of scientific autonomy. As one Czech

[49] For example, Estonia's memory institute employs eight people, Romania's some 40, both of which are a far cry from the 2,500 in Poland's IPN.

[50] Episodes in which memory institutes delay access to their archives to certain historians while, for instance, releasing lists of secret files to journalists (Górny 2007:103) reinforce concerns over their actual or potential control of communist-era files.

historian remarks: “You have to divide political institutions from science, otherwise you have the same situation as the institute for Marxism-Leninism that existed in Czechoslovakia before 1989, connecting historiography, science, ideology and politics” (M. Spurný, pers. comm., December 2012).

Several memory institutes have shaken the historiographic fields with unusually large budgets, occupying research areas that local scholars feel are legitimately covered by proper academic institutions (M. Górny, pers. comm., January 2013). The revitalized mnemonic role of post-communist historiography occurs as traditional research institutes remain dependent on the state, suffocated by centralization and financially weak. This forces many local historians to accumulate their researching, teaching and lecturing jobs in academic institutions with positions in memory institutes (D. Staliūnas, pers. comm., January 2013). Hence, while the leadership of memory institutes is genuinely committed to the advancement of specific ideas and values, this is not necessarily the case for many of the younger scholars who pragmatically join their ranks (M. Górny, pers. comm., January 2013)[51], and who can be considered therapeutic historians by necessity, rather than choice. Moreover, memory institutes provide young researchers with an opening wedge into a scholarly world that is otherwise unable to sustain them. In contrast to more scientific-oriented research, their work may become visible through abundant publication opportunities and commentary solicited by the media, particularly on occasion of official commemorations (Behr 2011:17-18).

[51] Salaries in traditional academic institutions in the region are exceptionally low and memory institutes generally offer better salaries: A young researcher’s pay in Poland’s IPN is 20 to 30 percent higher than a comparable position in a Polish university (Behr 2010:18).

Detractors claim these financial incentives unfairly tilt the scholarly field in favor of politically-driven research. While memory institutes receive their funds directly from the relevant ministries, scholars in faculties and research institutes are constantly faced with threats to their survival, and are compelled by force of circumstances to apply for new research projects yearly (K. Širok, pers. comm., November 2012): "Many feel it's a dishonest competition, that it creates two parallel systems, on one side you have an open competitive academic system, on the other a state system in which you don't know who is hired for what kind of academic credit and they don't have to publish internationally as actively as the others" (M. Tamm, pers. comm., January 2013). Co-opted historians are at times perceived as tainted by proximity to power and unable to comply with the prescriptions of the historiographic field: "These people have good positions, are very well paid, can influence things, and have power, which somehow corrupts anyone" (M. Spurný, pers. comm., December 2012). However, given the consistent perception among historiographic experts that memory institutes tend to include one or a handful of highly-qualified and respected historians, and that many of its historians join such institutes for financial, rather than ideological reasons, there is no reason to believe one's past as a therapeutic historian poses an obstacle for switching to a scientifically-oriented historiographic career, particularly if this therapeutic role was relatively anonymous, and if the therapeutic historian shows an ability to accumulate scientific capital.

### a. Research Constraints

Regardless of the individual normative orientations of therapeutic historians, the research directions set by memory institutes' leadership, as well as their publication targets (often quantitatively ambitious and with little regard for quality) produce severe structural constrains on their scholarly output. Research themes invariably reflect the political climate, and governmental changes can bring telling reformulations. For instance, if during its first mandate (1999-2005)

Poland's IPN included among its official research axes the "extermination of Jews in Polish territory", the election of the nationalist-conservative Law and Justice Party altered the research program and replaced the former axis with "Poles who saved Jews during World War II" (Behr 2011:23). This change was indicative of a broader ideological reshuffling according to which historical research would henceforth focus on Poland's glorious past, heroism, martyrdom and anti-communist resistance. 10 days after the new nationalist-conservative director Janusz Kurtyka took office, Pawel Machcewicz, one of the historians behind the creation of the institute and until then head of the Bureau of Public Education, resigned over changes in the institutes' internal balance of historiographic forces: "As long as I was director I tried to preserve a balance between people of various conditions, I tried to maintain academic standards … my understanding was that the new president supported a new group of historians and archivists who were more right-wing oriented and who identified themselves with the political and historical line of Law and Justice" (P. Machcewicz, pers. comm., March 2013)

Mechanisms of co-optation affected the historiographic field not just directly through the hiring of historians, but also indirectly through the set-up of financial incentives. This was the suspicion with regards to the Twentieth Century Institute in Hungary, affiliated to the House of Terror Museum, whose main vocation was to serve as a source of grants for external researchers. Critics saw the program as a mechanism to place ideological control on the institutes it contracts out (Gradvohl 2004:198-199), particularly since the topics covered by the Institute – Hungary's socialist Republics (1919 and 1949-1989) and the Holocaust – are anything but under-researched.

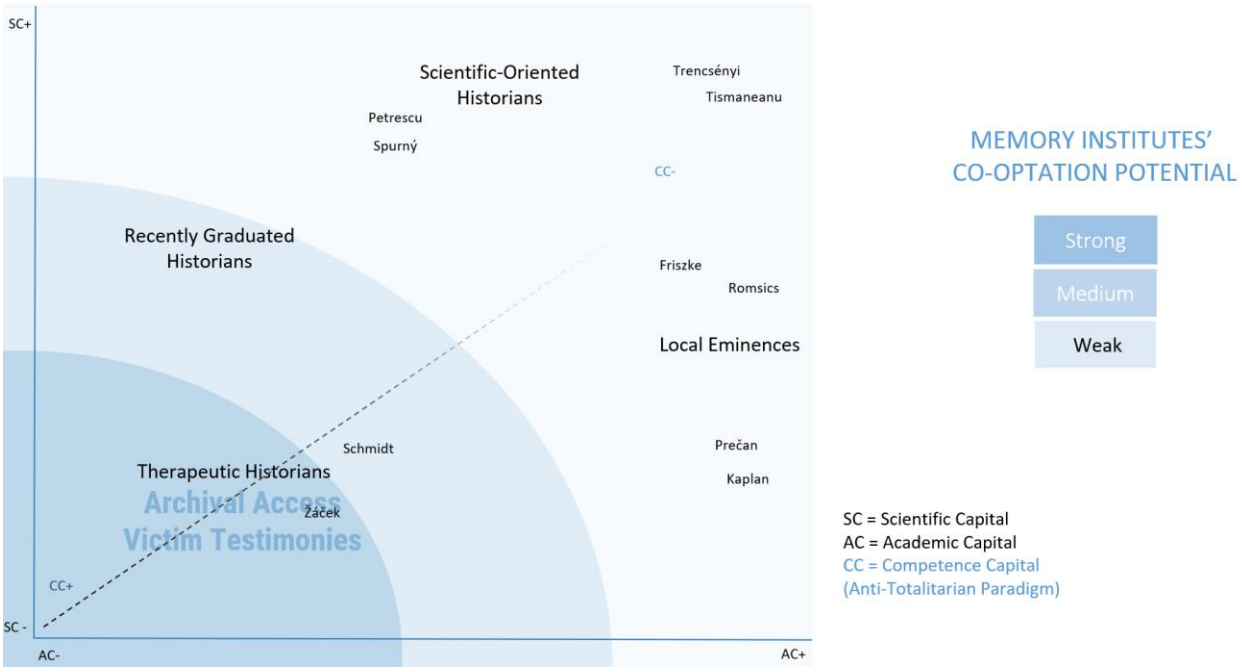
Ideological control on historical research has generally taken the form of promoting a totalitarian framework, although not necessarily explicitly or in a consistent and methodical fashion. A substantial bulk of memory institutes' research output will simply consist of an enumeration of

"communist crimes" rather than a historical, economic, or sociological survey of the communist period, leading critics to point out a fixation with "quantitative, rather than qualitative work" (K. Širok, pers. comm., November 2012). In a curious continuity with the token references to Marxism-Leninism in communist-era historiography, the term totalitarianism often appears somewhere early in scholarly texts, if only to pay lip service to the reigning discursive regime (F. Laczó, pers. comm., May 2013). Those dissenters, usually better qualified historians, who show unwillingness to conform to the framework have in the past left memory institutes (Kopeček and Spurný 2014), whereas others may express disagreement with the paradigm, but concede it is "politically effective" (R. Grosescu, pers. comm., February 2013). While memory institutes tend to host smaller departments dealing also with the Nazi era, and some of these departments have produced valuable research[52], generally this controlled plurality may serve the dual purpose of preempting criticism and validating the Nazi-Communist equation[53].

[52] The most prominent example comes from the IPN's inquiry into the Jedwabne pogrom, a mass murder of Polish Jews referred in Chapter 2. it is important to note that this investigation was a response to a public controversy spurred by the publication of Polish-American historian Jan Gross' *neighbors*, in which he portrays locals as willful participants in the pogrom. IPN confirmed the "decisive role" of some 40 local men and the passivity of the rest of the population. While reputed historians such as Gross himself praised the IPN for its investigation, the anger generated in conservative circles helped engender the Institute's subsequent ultra-conservative turn.

[53] According to Pullmann, memory institutes strategically keep some scholars with a different interpretation to project an image of openness and diversity (M. Pullmann, pers. comm., December 2012).

*Figure 5: Ideal-typical Historiographic Field of Post-Communism*




### b. Therapeutic Historians: An Academic Profile

Although scientific-oriented historians recognize the presence of some established colleagues within memory institutes (M. Górny, pers. comm., January 2013)[54], critics' have questioned the scientific competence of therapeutic historians, particularly in treating archival sources: "They just bring examples of oppression, without revealing the structures. If we want to understand the mechanisms of oppression we have to study the agents, how they behaved, how they deciphered the ideology, to what extent they were able to take risks, what compromises they were able to make. Instead of presuming or presupposing some huge agent called communist or totalitarian

[54] This is the case of Andrzej Paczkowski, a member of the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences since 1980 who joined the scientific board of Poland's IPN in 1999, when he also published a chapter in the *Black Book of Communism*. He has not shied away from intervening as a public intellectual, most notably to encourage a confrontation with Poles' occasional role as persecutors in the Holocaust (Polonsky and Michlic 2004:98), but he maintains a strong academic profile. Besides publishing extensively in Polish, during his period at IPN, which lasted until 2011, he took part in several international conferences and published in a number of French-speaking journals.

regime, we should analyze how this oppression actually worked" (M. Pullmann, pers. comm., December 2012).

Whether because of the role-demands of their position in memory institutes, or due to a deficit in educational attainments, therapeutic historians will tend to locate historical actors in clear-cut categories of victims, perpetrators or collaborators, a treatment that often occurs in a methodological void. Their detractors argue this is done without due care for context: secret police agents often compiled their files with information extracted through threats and coercion and, more broadly, therapeutic historians overlook socially perpetuated informal mechanisms of repression (M. Spurný, pers. comm., December 2012). Apor argues these historians are ultimately "isolated because they [stand outside of a] certain professional community that respects the same standards, knows the evidence, knows how to use it, how to tackle various types of theoretical and methodological challenges, and how to integrate in international professional networks" (P. Apor, pers. comm., May 2013).

While among them an explicit or implicit nation-centric and totalitarian approaches prevails, they reflect a broader historiographic aversion to conceptual elaboration, one that is amplified by the lack of traditional academic structures within memory institutes. This can even be the case in the largest, better funded and staffed of these institutes, the IPN. Górny notes that the absence of a scholarly community that critically oversees the research output results in plenty poorly edited and lengthy volumes of little scholarly value (M. Górny, pers. comm., January 2013), although IPN historians refuse this assessment: "Not a single book published by our institute was ever attacked from a professional historical point of view. There are controversies in the interpretations and there are politics involved ... [but we were never criticized] for not fulfilling professional standards" (Ł. Michalski, pers. comm., January 2013). However, qualified historians in these institutes find it

difficult to follow personal research preferences, as pressure to publish long, unscientific materials leads them to neglect tasks connected to their secondary academic appointments (Behr 2011:23-24).

While mostly removed from transnational scholarly communities, memory institute historians occasionally take part in international conferences. However, their presentations will consist of national-cases that show repression and its perpetrators, victims and collaborators, with little effort to engage in comparative exercises. Such conferences are frequently political, rather than academic venues, having at times taken place under the aegis of EU presidencies sympathetic to the anti-totalitarian agenda. An informative example is the European public hearing on "Crimes committed by totalitarian regimes", organized by the Slovenian Presidency and the EC in April 2008, which brought together historians from various memory institutes as well as mnemonic warriors such as Latvian MEP Sandra Kalniete, Lithuanian deputy Emanuelis Zingeris and former Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis. Despite one of the hearing's thematic headings being "Totalitarian Crimes: Cross-National Survey", there was not a trace of comparative frameworks. Presentations included: "Political repression in the 1940's and 1950's in Estonia", "Lithuanian victims of communist occupation", "Poland – the victim of two totalitarian regimes", "The Securitate legacy – terror in Romania", "Communist repression of "interior enemies" in Slovenia", and so on (Jambrek 2008). The Romanian memory institute provides a partial exception, as it attempted to boost its scientific credentials during Vladimir Tismaneanu's tenure. The US-based scholar, explored in more detail in Chapter 5, capitalized on his international contacts to invite foreign academics to the institute's scientific council, and motivated Romanian scholars to publish in international venues (Abraham, pers. comm., February 2013). Attempts were made to overcome the institute's scholarly isolation by bridging the concerns of local historians with larger debates

in international academia, although these efforts were short-lived (B. Iacob, pers. comm., February 2013).

### c. Public History: A Claim to Competence

Memory institute historians offset attacks on their credibility by unconditionally calling themselves historians without qualifiers (Ł. Michalski, pers. comm., January 2013; M. Schmidt, pers. comm., May 2013), often adopting a positivist and fact-collecting orientation justified in terms of emancipation from a legacy of communist ideological control (F. Laczó, pers. comm., May 2013). Hence their identity as historians is intimately tied to an anti-communist *ethos* that shapes their experiences navigating the scholarly field, particularly in countries whose academia did not undergo a radical reform after 1989. For instance, the isolation of therapeutic historians in Hungary is frequently seen as "a result of communist/leftist biases" against their Christian intellectual tradition, biases that are moreover responsible for sustaining communism in the past (P. Apor, pers. comm., May 2013). Their exclusion would merely mirror the absence of a genuine, anti-communist societal reform, invigorating their pastoral commitment to instilling "appropriate" values on the post-communist generation. Furthermore, they see their role as legitimated by their appointment to memory institutes, through which they establish a privileged link to archival sources, considered the principal material source for grasping a criminal communist past.

In their conception, therapeutic historians are therefore called upon to do more than just historical research, their task is to reveal to the public the damning truths about the communist past: "We were under attack by colleagues from the academy of sciences, I know how they deal with the communist past, how they get money for research on the communist era without finishing these studies, it was unacceptable and this is also why we established this institution. … [these colleagues] support inviting 20, 30 people and have a discussion somewhere in one room, we are

trying since the beginning to influence the public … we are a very important public institution that assesses responsibility and presents all information about the totalitarian regime" (P. Žáček, pers. comm., December 2012).

Hence, while they will occasionally publish in scholarly venues, therapeutic historians are not primarily oriented to this objective (P. Apor, pers. comm., May 2013). In fact, far more often they produce texts for non-scholarly books, journals and magazines, while using seminars and conferences to bring attention to the results of their investigation[55]. This indicates an inversion of the priorities of the historiographic field, whereby scholarly research is seen as providing a public good, rather than serving the broader scientific community: Estonian historian Toomas Hiio makes this distinction clear: "Universities are working slowly. Scholars have their own projects, research, students, articles … our government, our president, they need the answers very quickly" (T. Hiio, pers. comm., January 2013).

Fundamentally, Therapeutic historians see memory institutes as occupying a "future niche in the area of public history" that catapults scholars into a distinct role of making "academic history available to the public" (V. Nollendorfs, pers. comm., January 2013). This vocation is clearly expressed in memory institutes' mission statements, which depict fellow citizens as gravely and dangerously ignorant of the "true" nature of communism[56].The body of knowledge they

[55] Pavel Žáček, a historian and the first head of the Czech memory institute, fits neatly into this category. His CV does not distinguish between scholarly and non-scholarly publications, and his large publication record in Czech contrasted, until recently, with his only peer-reviewed publication in English, a four-page text on communist espionage in the 1950s published by the Journal of Intelligence History. In 2016, already as an advisor in the Department of War Veterans at the Czech Ministry of Defense, he publishes a longer article in The Journal of Slavic and Military Studies on links between Czechoslovak and Soviet secret services. The article lacks any theoretical or methodological discussion and relies almost exclusively on non-scholarly, Czech language sources.

[56] For example, the website of the Czech Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes includes a reference to the need to "remedy the public's, and especially schoolchildren's, acute ignorance of their recent turbulent history."

accumulate provides the substance for various memory practices that filter and simplify history for lay consumption. This is frequently done through secondary schools that memory institutes target by developing curricula, producing textbooks, training teachers in fields as diverse as history, literature or arts, or advising them on how to celebrate holidays in meaningful ways. For instance, Lithuania's state commission has established a large educational network with 8-9 "tolerance centers" whose seminars, also dedicated to the Holocaust, were attended by some 3,000 teachers (R. Račinskas, pers. comm., January 2013). Regional branches are in place in Poland, where the IPN allows teachers to network, take part in projects and give local feedback and evaluations to institute officials (Ł. Michalski, pers. comm., January 2013)[57]. Memory institutes have also sought to popularize historical knowledge by appealing directly to younger generations, namely by publishing comic books or creating board games. At times, memory institutes use public spaces to confront citizens with their past: The Czech memory institute organized an outdoor exposition in Wenceslas' square, one of the symbolic sites of the 1989 "Velvet Revolution" in Prague, erecting large placards with pictures and a basic bio of several Stalin-era officials, subsequently taking the exhibit to smaller cities in the country (P. Žáček, pers. comm., December 2012).

## 5. Conclusion: A New Field of Communist Historiography

This chapter has revealed a changing communist historiographic field initially shaped by a revival of crudely positivistic, fact-collecting, event-oriented approaches that claim to have the ability to

[57] IPN's extensive educational activities involve a) ensuring all secondary schools receive their monthly bulletin, featuring a DVD and a documentary; b) organization of school competitions to advance historical knowledge; c) elaboration of educational packages including photographs, copies of documents and maps; d) training lessons ran by IPN employees to sensitize high-school teachers on how to approach difficult historical periods and; e) school lectures by IPN employees. The institute also created a project titled "I'll tell you about the free Poland" that provides professional instruction for students who are then encouraged to record accounts of historical witnesses – namely world war II resistance or anti-communist opposition (Kaminski 2008:237).

strictly establish fact from fiction. Subjectively understood by its proponents as a rejection of ideological interference on scholarly work under communism, the dominant positivist paradigm exhibited considerable continuities with communist historiography in terms of an insistently nation-centric approach. From the point of view of its scientifically-oriented academic critics, the principal change appears to have been ideological: instead of serving the goals of communist ideology, self-described positivist research was now at the service of a national anti-communist reawakening. New methodological and conceptual approaches did however reach the region piecemeal, and found a more willing reception in younger scholars interested in a social, every-day life history of communism. In a move that evokes Cold-war era struggles over Soviet historiography, many in the younger generation affirmed their identity in juxtaposition to those who had institutionalized the totalitarian framework abroad (P. Apor, pers. comm., May 2013). However, they faced resistance and even marginalization from older, domestically better-established academics who favored political history and who, to varying degrees, embraced the precepts of totalitarian theory. These frictions reflected a broader struggle over the relative weight of competing forms of capital: older scholars who possess academic capital had often been catapulted into their positions more by merit of their competence capital – in this case, their alignment with the prevailing political *zeitgeist* of the 1990s and its nation-building priorities. Younger, transnationally connected and at times scientifically more accomplished scholars were generally unable to convert their scientific capital into academic positions, facing resistance from older peers who have an objective interest in legitimizing their upwardly mobile trajectories in the 1990s. Nevertheless, much of the region witnessed a gradual adoption of comprehensive standards of quality measurement and more transparent funding and employment opportunities, slowly tilting the field in favor of scientifically-oriented historians.

The arrival of memory institutes did not necessarily reverse the trend towards transparency and innovation, but it has slowed it down by displacing resources from more central areas of the field to the liminal space between politics and academia. As memory institutes enter a poorly-funded historiographic field, they provide material, financial and career incentives for valid scholars to submit – willingly or unwillingly – to a totalitarian paradigm firmly aligned with nation-centric and fact-collecting approaches. Scientifically-oriented historians within these institutes face several organizational and structural constrains to their academic freedom that ultimately conditions their scientific output (M. Górny, pers. comm., January 2013). Memory institutes thus contributed to revitalizing the relevance of competence capital as a structuring axis of the historiographic field.

While the scholarly-political entanglement of anti-communist national revival precedes memory institutes, the latter express its systematization. Mnemonic warriors boost the scientific capital of therapeutic historians by granting them privileged access to archives and reinforce their competence capital by assigning them a pivotal role in an imperative process of anti-communist national renewal. They are thus allowed to reach out to the entire mnemonic community of the nation, reframing history by stressing common suffering and externalizing the 'alien' communist experience until a new national memory has been constructed. In exchange, therapeutic historians adopt a scholarly orientation that aligns with political anti-communism, producing research that scientifically legitimates it. This complex network linking together archives, victim testimonies, therapeutic historians, mnemonic warriors and a more or less overt anti-totalitarian framework requires a body capable of evincing resources from different fields, oversee the fluxes across them, and generate a coherent outward flow of mnemonic expertise. This new form of mnemonic

intervention, linking historical and political practice, is precisely what memory institutes provide and what allows us to speak of a novel regime of remembrance.

Depending on their size and resources, memory institutes remain relatively marginal, but central enough to the field. Their frequent public visibility and significant political weight are however symptomatic of the field's weak autonomy vis-à-vis politics, which results in an unclear hierarchy between academic, scientific and competence capital. Memory institutes are not accredited to grant degrees, but nevertheless young historians can use them as an early career option with which to amass a modicum of scientific and competence capital. These two forms of capital eventually exert contradictory pulls, and young scholars face the option of turning to public history – for which they find rewards at the thick boundary between politics and historiography – or pursuing a financially riskier scholarly career.

But could memory institutes gradually reorient their research practices towards scientific imperatives, could their priorities be reframed so as to become a legitimate "player" in the historiographic field? The political, rather than meritocratic appointment criteria of leadership and scientific council positions, the top-down fashion by which research directions are set, and the isolation or removal of lower-ranking, dissenting voices in the past all bode against this possibility. As long as memory institutes offer superior financial incentives to its historians, and these historians are given the simple choice of paying lip service to the anti-totalitarian line without overhauling their research, memory institute leaders are likely to hold disciplinary power over them, ensuring the translation of political discourse into historiographic research and vice-versa. But more importantly, memory institutes' deep entanglement to a political field that is hegemonic vis-à-vis historiography makes the possibility of their transformation into "islands of positive deviation" unlikely, from a strictly scholarly point of view. In contrast, what they currently

represent could be construed, from a conservative point of view, as an island of positive deviation from a historiographic mainstream perceived as overly leftist or liberal.

## CHAPTER 5: MEMORY ENTREPRENEURS, ARCHITECTS OF FIELD EMERGENCE

This chapter offers a fresh look at the evolution of post-communist memory politics by following the trajectories of the *memory entrepreneurs* consistently found in collective memory's cross-field entanglements. I argue that the key to revealing the mechanisms whereby collective memory is disciplined into a regime of remembrance lies in the liminal spaces where these hybrid actors consistently co-operate. I focus on four biographies that are at the same time emblematic of this entrepreneurial condition, and exceptional in the dimension of it in which they excel. Vladimir Tismaneanu, former head of the Romanian memory institute, outshines his peers in terms of academic credentials. Mária Schmidt, the perennial head of Hungary's Terror House, holds an unmatched political clout. The late Janusz Kurtyka, former head of Poland's memory institute, was perhaps the most versatile of memory entrepreneurs, thriving in an unusual array of archival, educational and judicial memory practices. Finally, Neela Winkelmann's cosmopolitan profile, which gained her the position of managing director of the Platform of European Memory and Conscience epitomizes memory entrepreneurs' turn to international cooperation. In this chapter, I combine field analysis and the reiterated problem solving (RPS) approach to demonstrate how, through three sequences of problem-solving, memory entrepreneurs were catapulted to the position of grand articulators of collective memory, ultimately bringing about the emergence of a relatively autonomous mnemonic field[58].

[58] Relative autonomy conveys the notion of an arena of organized struggle that operates relatively independently from those of other realms, exerting an attraction to its gravitational center that overpowers those of neighboring fields. This autonomy is relative as the pulls exerted by neighboring fields cannot be completely neutered.

As in previous chapters, the current one conveys an understanding of collective memory as a process that entails oscillations across fields and struggles within them. As collective memory traverses the political field, elites shape it to accommodate their ambition to attain or maintain power, legitimize their claims to rule and de-legitimize those of their opponents (Eyal 2003; Enyedi 2005). As it crosses the field of historiography, memory becomes an object of struggles for academic capital: therapeutic historians[59] committed to national renewal will elevate it to the condition of history, and position themselves as their rightful interpreter, whereas scientific-oriented historians will seek to deconstruct it and put its components at the service of scholarly inquiry (Kopeček 2008:6). Finally, in the Eurocratic field[60], memory is scaled up to a symbol of Eastern Europe's full recognition as a constitutive part of the EU (Littoz-Monnet 2012:1193), while aiding in the validation of anti-communist narratives central to domestic political competition or state-building.

Collective memory's capture by the above fields is hardly an uncoordinated or spontaneous affair. Rather, memory is seized and escorted by an alliance that cannot be strictly tied to a single arena, one that organizes and directs the mnemonic flux across topographical locations. Their unique predicament has been eased via institutionalization: As post-communist memory traverses these local orders, it increasingly shows the coherent face of memory institutes, at the helm of which we invariably find memory entrepreneurs. Like their leaders, these hybrid bodies are difficult to locate: they are neither historical research institutes nor party-affiliated think-tanks, but they

[59] Defined in the previous chapter as those historians that place the commitment to anti-communist national renewal above the advancement of theoretical, conceptual or methodological debates in historiography.

[60] By Eurocratic field I mean the agents and institutions dedicated to European integration and/or to the functioning of EU institutions, from the EC to well established lobbyists, and whose cooperation and competition is guided by multiple, cumulative compromises and formal and informal rules (Georgakakis and Rowell; 2013:3-6)

nevertheless claim to research the past for purposes of sustaining a democratic *ethos*[61] at the behest of political parties. Inspired by anti-communist conservative dissident thought (Bier 2011), this *ethos* is articulated through an anti-totalitarian framework (Clarke 2014) that seeks to mobilize support for anti-communist national-renewal across Central and Eastern Europe. These transnational correspondences beg a question: how did memory entrepreneurs craft this semblance of consensus? What were the conditions and arrangements that allowed the consistent dissemination of this discourse across realms? And how did these actors accommodate the diverse interests prescribed by each field into a new order? In sum, how did a mnemonic field emerge and what was the role of memory entrepreneurs in its inception?

I begin by noting what memory entrepreneurs are not: They are not prominent dissidents of the 1990s, like Václav Havel or Adam Michnik, catapulted to fame by Western observers who saw them as heroes of an intellectual anti-communist resistance; they are also not strictly mnemonic warriors (Bernhard and Kubik 2014) [62] like Hungarian Prime-Minister Viktor Orbán and former Polish Primer-Minister Jarosław Kaczyński, who became the most visible and contemporary representatives of anti-communist national renewal; neither are they (with Tismaneanu's exception) established academics although, like them, they will possess scholarly qualifications and a penchant for historical subjects. However, they discreetly embody all three types of actors. With dissidents, they share a history of intellectual, and at times active opposition to communism,

[61] For example, Slovakia's Nation's Memory Institute is devoted to "promote ideas of freedom and defense of democracy against such regimes as Nazism and Communism."

[62] Bernhard and Kubik define mnemonic warriors as actors who "drive a sharp line between themselves" and competing actors in terms of their ability to provide truthful accounts of the past, believing such accounts can or should "become the foundation of social and political life" (2014:13). My usage of the term mostly applies to politicians, though several other public figures could fall into this encompassing category, including memory entrepreneurs who, in fairness, should be considered a subgroup of mnemonic warriors.

but diverge with those liberal dissidents who welcomed the revival of socialist successor parties as part of the normalization of party politics. With historians, they share official credentials and a passion for gauging the past, but they will distinguish themselves by an overriding commitment to a public education embedded in faintly concealed moral undertones. With mnemonic warriors, particularly those in East-Central Europe, they converge on the assessment that the left's return to power was evidence of deficient transitional justice measures, and that as a result communist-era networks have penetrated political, judicial and economic centers of power. Memory entrepreneurs' distinctiveness is thus not rooted in an ideology shared in many circles. Instead, I suggest they personify a hybrid biographical trajectory, one expressing a familiarity with the academic field, but also with the exigencies of political posts and anti-communist resistance. Their ambiguous skills are in full swing when they effortlessly move between academia and politics, negotiating the discourse between scholarly knowledge and political ideology. Above all, their entrepreneurial singularity lies in their ability to recombine resources from across the political, scholarly and Eurocratic fields to produce new alliances, novel power arrangements, innovative institutions and powerful identities. In what follows I show how, by performing these roles in domestic and transnational settings, memory entrepreneurs played a pivotal role in the emergence of a relatively autonomous mnemonic field.

## 1. Field Emergence through Reiterated Problem-Solving

The emergence of a mnemonic field in post-communist Europe constitutes an empirical object that, following Ermakoff (2014), I describe as an exceptional case. While fields of organized striving are aplenty, their emergence tends to follow amorphous, unspectacular processes that leave few empirical traces (Fligstein and McAdam 2012:165). Therefore, previous inquiries into field emergence have tended to identify momentous historical transformations at their root, which

indicates structural shake-ups may help lay bare the mechanisms of inception. For instance, Bourdieu's account of the appearance of the French literary field places it in the context of a sudden surge in secondary school diplomas: as thousands of newcomers from the humanities struggle to muster the economic means and social connections necessary to capitalize on their degrees, many finally opt for literary professions (Bourdieu 1996:54-55). Steinmetz's (2008) analysis of the emergence of the colonial state posits it as a consequence of the momentous challenges of colonization, particularly the need to develop effective native governance and ethnographic practices. Similarly, Medvetz's (2012) study of the rise of think tanks elevates the epochal institutionalization of an academic, and later bureaucratic field to a pre-condition for the emergence of a hybrid field of think-tanks.

The empirical traces left by such exceptional cases can assume the heuristic function of highlighting the characteristic features of this "prototype" through which we may unmask "relations that, in more mundane instances are not as salient" (Ermakoff 2014:235). Eastern Europe's well-documented but tumultuous transition from state socialism offers several opportunities for exploring such cases: three decades ago the fall of the Berlin wall brought a radical subversion in the political, economic and value system of a hitherto solid geopolitical block. Its relatively stable and predictable political, scholarly and economic fields went into disarray as communist parties lost their monopoly on power, newly elected governments privatized the once state-run economy, and universities eschewed some disciplines while embracing new ones. Put differently, the transformations of post-communism have led to a radical societal rearrangement, engendering 'extreme' responses whose traces we detect in the collapse, rearrangement and appearance of a wide array of fields. I therefore treat these radical readjustments

as heuristic devices for revealing mechanisms of field emergence that in otherwise prosaic settings would remain black-boxed.

Bourdieu has posited that a comprehensive interpretation of fields fuses synchronic and genetic analysis (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:90), entailing a historical perspective external to it and antecedent to its formation. I thus suggest approaching the problematic of field emergence with the diachronic depth provided by Haydu's (1998) Reiterated Problem-Solving approach: RPS is optimal for comparing cases that are temporally, rather than geographically distinct, and connected not just by a series of contrasts and similarities, but also by sequences of inter-connected events. Similarly to the narrative method, RPS is sensitive to historical and intellectual contexts, but upgrades the former's explanatory power by pin-pointing the causal mechanisms connecting events and interpreting them as sequences of problem solving that lead to distinct and variously durable social regimes. Hence, in RPS past problems and solutions, however contingent or idiosyncratic, can have cumulative influences on posterior ones by 'locking-in' a given path, as postulated by path-dependency theory. What RPS adds to it is the acknowledgement that such instances of problem solving are not merely accountable to the independent choices of actors, but are both conditioned by broader historical trajectories *and* constitutive of a larger sequence of problem solving. Furthermore, field analysis and RPS approaches share a sensibility to context that envisions actors' choices as simultaneously consequential and constrained, while they both privilege multi-directional, interwoven causal lines.

I set out by defining two temporal cases representing distinct stages in memory politics. Both pertain to a larger trajectory of problem-solving, in which memory entrepreneurs see a persistent "communist threat" as the problem, but at its very essence this problematization follows the constrains of a larger historical process of a return to "Europe" (Neumann 2002:121) – understood

as a signifier for everything totalitarianism is not: normalcy, democracy and sovereignty (Holy 1996:108). These ideal-typical cases represent temporally distinct social topographies, defined in accordance to contrasting solutions to a "communist threat" and overlapping geographical boundaries in Central and Eastern Europe[63]. No doubt a socially diverse region, I nevertheless consider that the crux of the argument relates to a shared experience of state socialism, of European integration, and a common perception that the remnants of the communist past threaten the democratic order.

During the early transition, which I will call the *political stage* of memory politics, various groups on the post-communist right position themselves as bearers of an "anti-communist national interest" (Verdery 1996:90) and attempt to deal a permanent blow on the former communist left. As the region witnesses its first democratic elections, communist successor parties, and left-wing politics in general are utterly weakened and discredited. A new historical trajectory calls for an unquestionable "return to Europe", to "normality", to the democratic path that had "artificially" been blocked for half a century (Holy 1996:151), reducing wiggle room for programmatic differentiation among parties. These ideological constrains place emphasis on the symbolic capital of anti-communism, which moreover remains relatively up for grabs (Judt 2002:172). Liberal and conservative political groupings, endorsed by a substantial number of former dissidents, compete to provide the master narrative on how communism is to be assessed. Following public alarm over the reported ability of former communist networks to blackmail public officials and derail democratic and economic reforms (Williams *et al*. 2005:29-30; Williams 2003:2-5), politicians

[63] Those of post-communist EU members: Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary and Slovenia joined the EU on May 1st, 2004 together with Malta and Cyprus. Romania and Bulgaria became members in 2007 and Croatia in 2013. I only sparsely invoke East Germany, since its reunification with West Germany provided an altogether contrasting blueprint for transition into a pre-existing and democratically mature political community.

experiment with a diverse array of measures to rid their countries of the remnants of the past. Trials, restitution and, most notably, the lustration of former communist officials are variously attempted with unsatisfactory results. Drawing a "thick line" between communists and democrats, or between victims and perpetrators, proves thorny (Ash 2002:272), revealing a discomforting grey zone under actually existing socialism. During this period citizens experience a dramatic decrease in living standards, and meanwhile former communist parties slowly but successfully refashion themselves as competent and pro-European economic managers, returning to power starting in the mid-1990s (Bozoki and Ishiyama 2002:5). In large part as a reaction to the resurgence of the left, the conservative dissident narrative of a "communist threat", which sees the left's return as illegitimate (Enyedi 2016:214), gains momentum rather than receding. The rhetoric of an unfinished revolution becomes dominant in several successful political campaigns in post-communism, which elect Fidesz (1998 2010 and 2014) in Hungary, Solidarity Electoral Action (1997) and Law and Justice (2005) in Poland, or the Justice and Truth Alliance (2004) in Romania (Mark 2010:1-3 14). These campaigns feed on a lingering popular resentment with the economic transformation, seen as having unduly benefited former communist-era managers (Eyal *et al.* 1998; Ost 1993:469; Holy 1996:163), and redirect this anger towards the left. Meanwhile, the introspective discourses of liberal dissidence, which called for citizens to assess their own role in reproducing communist power (Michnik and Havel 1993), lose political salience.

By the late 2000s, memory politics has moved on to a *scientific stage* that has captured the flux of collective memory and consolidated it into a tightly-knit regime of remembrance. Memory institutes are by now firmly established as this regime's visible face, governing, through an array of research and public education practices, a mnemonic field dominated by the anti-totalitarian ideals of conservative dissidence. The memory of communism still shapes, determines and

fractures regional politics (Bernhard and Kubik 2014; Enyedi 2008; Haughton 2014:225). But the symbolic capital of anti-communism is no longer up for grabs in the political field: instead, it is stored, administered and apportioned by memory institutes invariably set-up by right-wing governments. Under this monopolistic arrangement, serious manifestations of communist nostalgia are vigorously condemned or banned at the elite level (Klumbyté 2010:296), but a budding grassroots nostalgia of the communist past (Velikonja 2009; Duvold and Ekman 2016) causes continuing unease. While conscious of the right's attempt to de-legitimate redistributive or leftist politics through memory institutes (M. Pullmann, pers. comm., December 2012) the left is unable to shut them down due to a legitimacy deficit (M. Schmidt, pers. comm., May 2013)[64].

## 2. Locating Entrepreneurship in Field Emergence

Fligstein (2001) has noted the import of "skilled social actors" in triggering field emergence, that is, the inception of a field of organized striving around a previously unorganized space. Gifted with entrepreneurial talent, these actors typically engage in translating existing rules via persuasion, cooperation and accommodation of other groups to produce the compromise identities and local orders that subsequently structure the emergent field. Stark recasts these skills as an "ability to keep multiple evaluative principles in play and to exploit the resulting friction of their interplay" (2009:15), suggesting an ambiguous, rather than disorganized location. In this reading, entrepreneurial talent has roots in the holding of what he terms "ambiguous assets", which enable actors to speculate on the prevailing order of worth and exploit uncertainty to amass and incorporate unique recombinant resources. I therefore reformulate entrepreneurialism in field

[64] No government has dared to shut a memory institute down in the region: the public could perceive it as an attempt to conceal crimes on the part of political elites. However, leftist governments have slashed their funding or reshuffled their leadership (See Hamvay 2015 or B.C. 2013)

analytical terms as an aptitude to navigate across the idiosyncratic logics of distinct fields[65] and exploit their frictions to generate new social arrangements and orders of worth.

Our first memory entrepreneur is perhaps the most recognizable representative of his class in the scholarly community: Vladimir Tismaneanu. Former President of the Scientific Council of the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes (IICCMER) in Romania (2010-2012), Tismaneanu is better known to Western academic audiences as a Professor of Political Science at the University of Maryland and former editor of the peer-reviewed East European Politics and Societies Journal. Less known are his parallel, long-standing flirtations with the political realm that date back to his youth in communist Romania. Tismaneanu was born into a family of underground communists – his father fought in the Spanish Civil War and became chair of the Marxist-Leninism department at the University of Bucharest. Tismaneanu himself endorsed both the regime and reformist Marxist ideas during his time as a graduate student and student leader, yet his family's deteriorating political position eventually created obstacles to his career, precipitating his decision to leave the country in 1981. Ultimately settling in the US in 1982, at the height of Reaganite Cold War, he decisively drops his neo-Marxist leanings and gains recognition as an expert on Romanian matters, relentlessly attacking Ceausescu's regime from platforms such as Radio Free Europe and Voice of America[66] (Poenaru 2013:113 127). His academic career progresses in parallel: In 1983, he gets a position at the Foreign Policy Research Institute, and in 1985 he begins teaching at the University of Pennsylvania. Post-communism would bring new

[65] By logic of the field I refer to the social categories and hierarchies through which agents perceive and order a given social realm (Buchholz 2016:37)

[66] Indicative of the change of tone in his reporting, in 1992 Tismaneanu would publish a collection of his RFE essays in Romanian titled *The Archeology of Terror*.

opportunities to advance his hybrid career, as the pluralization of Romanian media field catapults him into the influential role of opinion-maker. Since 2009 he has acted as Academic Council Chairman of the Institute for People's Studies, a think tank affiliated to the Romanian Democratic Liberal Party.

Janusz Kurtyka personifies a more nationally-bound, but almost ideal-typical version of memory entrepreneur. President (2005-2010) of the largest and most important institution of its kind, the IPN,[67] Kurtyka's political training began in the 1980s with his involvement in opposition student protests and clandestine publications against the regime. He contemporaneously pursued his doctoral studies at the Institute of History of Sciences in Warsaw, enrolling in 1983. During the last decade of communist rule, he puts his academic skills at the service of political resistance by giving a series of lectures at the underground Jagiellonian University on World War II and post-War history. The same university would grant him, in 2000, a doctoral degree in history, after a short research period at Central European University, a US-accredited institution in Budapest. His post-communist trajectory was however never disconnected from politics: He was a member of various conservative parties throughout the 1990s and ran for Parliament for the Catholic Electoral Committee "Fatherland" in 1993. Kurtyka died in April 2010 when the presidential plane in which he travelled with then Polish President Lech Kaczyński and several other high-level officials crashed on its way to Smolensk, Russia[68].

[67] IPN boasts 2500 historians among its ranks, 80 km of archives and 1000 educational projects yearly, having also hosted 400 exhibits by 2013. By way of comparison, Slovakia's memory institute had 1.8km of archives and 80 employees in 2009, and Lithuania's Genocide and Resistance Center had 135 employees in 2006 (Mink 2013:161).

[68] The officials were headed to the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Katyn massacre, a mass murder of Polish political, intellectual and military elites at the hands of Soviet Secret Police, then named NKVD. The plane crashed near Smolensk, a few kilometers from the site of the massacre where a joint Russian-Polish ceremony was to take place.

But perhaps no memory entrepreneur has amassed more power than Mária Schmidt, referred to as the "court historian" (Balogh 2015) of post-communism's most successful mnemonic warrior, Viktor Orbán[69]. Schmidt has allegedly influenced the Hungarian Prime-Minister's historical awareness[70] and since 2002 to this day she actively legitimates his political agenda as head of the region's most notorious museum of communism: The Terror House. After finishing her studies in History and German literature before the regime change, Schmidt became Assistant professor at the Institute of History of the Pázmány Péter Catholic University in 1996. With Orbán's election in 1998 she moves to politics to become her Chief Advisor, a position she will hold until the end of his term in 2002. Her entry into politics does not signal an abandonment of academia: In 1999, within a year of her new advisory position, Schmidt receives a PhD degree in History, which allows her to become an Associate Professor at her university, and a full Professor in 2010. In 2008 Schmidt begins to assert herself also in the media field after her nomination as board chairman of Hungary's media union.

Tismaneanu, Kurtyka and Schmidt illustrate the trajectory required for the complex, cross-field balancing act expected of memory institute heads. Granted, their role demands the possession of the symbolic capital of anti-communism, at times accumulated via communist-era dissidence, but invariably reinforced by a post-communist commitment to anti-communist national renewal. Yet in isolation this symbolic capital is of little value. More importantly, memory entrepreneurs are expected to exploit their liminal position to negotiate the transactions between political, scientific,

[69] Orbán, a prominent and charismatic former dissident, was Prime-Minister between 1998 and 2002, and accumulates two additional terms (with a constitutional majority) since 2010.

[70] For instance, Schmidt reportedly convinced Orbán that Hungary had lost its sovereignty and freedom to act during the 1944 Nazi invasion, an interpretation that left-liberal historians dismiss as an attempt to deflect responsibility for Hungary's role in the Holocaust (Hamvay 2015)

academic and symbolic capital across the fields in which memory institutes are anchored. Hybridity is therefore a precondition to understanding the needs, weaknesses and interests of the actors and devices that help black-box collective memory into a regime of remembrance.

With the purpose of avoiding the mistakes of the political stage – above all the failure to permanently delegitimize former communists – memory entrepreneurs undertook several problem-solving tasks that I will group into three, overlapping sequences of interest alignment. We define interest alignment as a distinct form of alliance whose members may not initially identify a clearly shared goal nor define the boundaries of the coalition. While in field theoretical terms, an alliance means putting the capital of the allied actors at the service of a common cause readily identifiable on all sides, interest alignment comes closer to a Latourian construct in which "the fact of alliance is what explains how the interests of the various parties are construed and adjusted" (Eyal 2013:166). Interest alignment reflects the work of constructing a network of unstable morphology that traverse various fields and constantly grapples with the disparate interests prescribed by each of them. The crafting of a goal will therefore neither precede nor succeed the formation of an alliance, rather we witness an iterative process whereby allies gradually forge compromises on both the objective and the ramifications of the network.

## 3. First Sequence: Vertical Interest Alignment

Vertical interest alignment describes the alliances that occur within a relatively bounded social space – such as a polity – between actors in fields distinguished, among other things, by an unequal circulation of power within them. Since the advent of regime change and with the accompanying reformulation of national identities, the post-communist political field has consistently encroached on the boundaries of a weaker scholarly field to validate political ideologies. The ongoing, and largely expectable reformulation of national identities therefore occurs in the context of weak

research structures, poor funding and decades of isolation from mainstream academic debates (Antohi 2007:XII-XIII), producing a vulnerable historiographic field. The dominant scholarly tendency was, in much of the region, a return to a supposedly unideological and fact-collecting positivism that resulted in an unreflected reproduction of the anti-totalitarian framework that permeated the political atmosphere in the 1990s (F. Laczó, pers. comm., May 2013). The framework underscores continuity between the terror of post-war years and the contemporary remnants of the regime, collapsing temporally and spatially distant historical events with current affairs, as I illustrate below. On this basis, political elites found an amenable partner in substantial sectors of local historiography.

Vertical interest alignment was first attempted on an arguably ad-hoc basis with historical commissions[71]. But memory institutes eventually impose themselves as an enduring model, appearing in Lithuania (1992), Poland (1998), Hungary (2002), Slovakia (2003), Romania (2005), Czech Republic (2007), Slovenia (2008) and Estonia (2008) via a strikingly similar arrangement: The primary exchange involves scholars granting scientific legitimation to the narratives of political elites in exchange for greater visibility, easier access to archival sources and superior funding. Political elites, on their part, seek scholarly validation for their narratives of a "Communist threat" by creating incentives for research guided by an anti-totalitarian framework. Exploiting these political-scholarly intersections as spaces of articulation, memory entrepreneurs intervene to concert the interests of actors situated in the formally separated fields of politics and academia, overseeing an exchange of political and scientific capital across them.

[71] Most prominently in 1998 in the three Baltic states (Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia), where such commissions were tasked with investigating the communist and Nazi periods as a response to Western informal demands to come to terms with the legacy of the Holocaust (Pettai 2011).

Tismaneanu's role in Romanian endeavors at vertical interest alignment were the subject of acute public scrutiny and acrimonious contestation in Romania. In 2006 liberal-conservative President Traian Băsescu appointed the US-based scholar as head of the Presidential Commission for the Study of the Communist Dictatorship in Romania, a body charged with drafting a historical assessment of communism to the Romanian Parliament. The report claimed to provide a scientific account of the crimes and abuses of the communist regime that would allow its condemnation as an illegitimate and criminal regime (Cesereanu 2008:271). The so-called *Tismaneanu Commission* clearly emanated from the political field, raising suspicions that it gave Băsescu an opportunity to "settle scores with coalition partners and political opponents" and a "means of avoiding lustration" (Ciobanu 2009:324) in a country where – unexceptionally – former communists populate the entire political spectrum. But it also constituted a major turning point in the country's memory politics, away from the trials and lustration attempts of the past, and towards sponsorship of official narratives of communism.

As head of the Commission, Tismaneanu was in charge of aligning interests vertically, ensuring that the final report would scientifically validate the conclusions pre-ordained by the President: Having been given a free hand at appointing Commission members and privileged access to previously restricted archival sources, Tismaneanu found himself in a privileged position to shape the alliance. Tismaneanu selected the Commission's 19 members not merely on merit of their scholarly qualifications, but also of their anti-communist credentials before and *after* 1989. This subgroup comprised intellectuals committed to ridding the country of the allegedly pervasive influence of former members of the *Securitate*, Romania's communist era secret service. The Commission also included 18 remunerated experts for whom participation in the Commission constituted an unprecedented opportunity. Tismaneanu selected them primarily from a pool of

young scholars, specialized in communist repression and anti-communist resistance, who had recently received their PhDs (Ciobanu 2009:324-5). Crucially, the commission's report did not restrict itself to the communist period or to archival sources. The document accused President and honorary leader of the Social Democrats Ion Iliescu, referenced 28 times in the text, of "cultivating methods similar to those practiced by communists, the demonization of civil society and democratic parties, symbolic manipulation, unscrupulous propaganda" with the intent "to strangle the frail pluralism born on December 1989" (cf Hogea 2010:23). Iliescu, who had been marginalized from the Communist-era elite in the 1970s due to his reformist leanings, was also accused of collaborating with the Securitate during communism. Venturing into post-communist history, the Tismaneanu commission fulfilled the political act of collapsing the anti-totalitarian framework with a contemporary "communist threat", scientifically validating contemporary political competition as a struggle between former communists and committed democrats (Mark 2010:44).

The vertical interest alignment between Băsescu and Tismaneanu engendered synergic effects for their respective field positions. The commission's work enmeshed the Social Democrats in a regime officially condemned as criminal and illegitimate by scientific authorities, endowing Băsescu with a newly found anti-communist symbolic capital that tilted the political field in his favor. Tismaneanu's work found compensation in his growing control of mnemonic production in the country, which culminated with his taking the helm of Romania's Memory Institute in 2010[72]. An earlier controversy, during which critics accused Tismaneanu of using his influence on editors

[72] To be precise, Romania's memory institute preceded the Băsescu commission by a year, and both represented attempts to monopolize the symbolic capital of anti-communism on the part of rival right-wing factions. The Romanian memory institute however provided a more enduring model and one that, similarly to its peers in the region, is amenable to colonization by election victors.

to suppress criticism of the report (Hyperliteratura 2013), is illustrative of his growing influence. Several mainstream liberal and left-wing scholars such as historian Michael Shafir, political scientist and former liberal politician Daniel Barbu, and left-wing activist and writer Vasile Ernu compiled the most prominent and prestigious critique of the report in 2008. Published under the title of *The Illusion of Anti-Communism*, the authors argued the report contained factual inaccuracies, conceptual leaps and granted intellectuals excessive protagonism. Furthermore, it directly attacked Tismaneanu for failing to engage with criticism from peers and opting instead to react to reproaches from the far-right, accusations reproached by the US scholar. Most significantly, despite *Illusions* having been authored by a group of notorious and previously published writers, the book could not find a mainstream publishing house in Romania that would circulate the book, which its authors finally released in neighboring Moldova (Poenaru 2013:145-156).

In Hungary, the co-optation of historiography took place outside the limelight, but gave rise to the most durable and notorious of memory entrepreneurs, Mária Schmidt. As she joined the Orbán government as Chief Advisor in 1998, one of the cabinet's first acts was to defund two independent research institutes: The Institute of Political History (by HUF 50 million, roughly USD 230,000 at the time) and the Institute for the Research of 1956 by HUF 67 million. Simultaneously, the budget allocated HUF 117 million to a newly founded Public Foundation for the Research of Central and Eastern Europe, headed by none other than Schmidt. From within this foundation three, formally distinct institutions are created: The XXth Century Institute, the XXIst Century Institute and the Terror House Museum[73], all of which see Schmidt appointed director-general (Hamvay 2015).

[73] According to Schmidt, then leader of the Fidesz parliamentary group József Szájer suggested to her the idea of a Museum of Communism. After Fidesz's election win the following year, Schmidt claims the museum became a priority for Orbán and the party (Stumpf 2012)

Besides producing its own government-friendly research, the XXth Century Institute also provides grants that set a favored research direction throughout the historiographic field (Gradvohl 2004:198-199). The Terror House, on the other hand, becomes the largest and better endowed museum of communism in the region. Its location conveys continuity between fascism and communism, as the building was used as a branch of the Hungarian national socialists and later by the Communist secret police. Visitors are taken through its cellars, interrogation rooms and gallows where both Nazis and communists tortured and executed political prisoners. The Museum tells "the story of undifferentiated terror from the moment of the German occupation until (…) the Soviet army left the territory of Hungary" (Rév 2005:313). However, for its many critics, an even greater problem was in the longer, implicit story it told: The museum dedicates all but two of its two dozen rooms to communism, with everything in them "intended to keep alive the hatred of former Communist leaders and their sons and daughters." (Turai 2009:102). More significantly, Orbán's inauguration of the Terror House, at the height of the 2002 election campaign, escalated his party's historical policy and sent a coded warning against allowing the Communist successor party back into power (Mark 2011:63).

Retaining her various director-general positions to this day, Schmidt navigates the political, historiographic, museographic, and media fields to legitimate her government's historical narrative, consistently portraying its opponents as obstacles to a true systemic change[74]. As becomes obvious in her media interventions, Schmidt employs the same technique as the Tismaneanu commission, collapsing history with present political developments. A case in point

[74] In countries such as Poland and Hungary conservatives have de-legitimized not just socialists, but also liberals by pointing to their prominent role in the round-table negotiations that sanctioned the regime change. Liberals saw these negotiations as a manifestation of political maturity (Michnik 1999:239-45), while conservatives have constructed them as indicative of liberal complicity with the communist threat.

is an article written shortly after Orbán's re-election in 2014, where Schmidt reformulates the "communist threat" by bundling an externally imposed Soviet communism with the contemporary, unpatriotic, liberal left:

"Following the 2014 elections, the decades-long influence and intellectual terror of the left-liberal opinion leaders are slowly vanishing … The biggest problem of the left-liberal elite is that the phrase "Hungarian interest" is not comprehensible to them … They are, as such, greater than the nation, a cosmopolitan or internationalist group. Some of them don't even notice that they have become servants to foreign interests. Of course, some are being well-compensated for their hard work. There is nothing unusual about this; our leftists have become accustomed to it. As in the past, they still protect the interests of the Soviet Empire's status quo. While that empire existed, their loadstar was the representation of Soviet interests. Now they have become subservient to the talking points of the West" (Schmidt 2014).

Schmidt's versatility is indicative of memory entrepreneurs' capacity to edify a powerful symbolic repertoire in various social realms. For this purpose, memory institutes engage in a palette of practices that go beyond the historiographic sphere – research, conferences and publishing – and sees them embroiled in assisting judicial investigations, digitalizing archives for public access, financing lay-science publications, producing documentaries, curating museum exhibits or providing material and technical support for secondary school teachers (See Figure 1). As director of Poland's IPN Krakow branch, Kurtyka had five years to provide ample evidence of his elasticity prior to his appointment as national director in 2005. Kurtyka proceeded to an impressive array of cross-field investments: His first priority was to ensure the IPN's takeover of various archives from communist era police, courts, prison and other state and local authorities, which were to be made available to his researchers. He also went to great lengths to ensure the growth and smooth

functioning of the branch's Public Education Office, entrusted with popularizing said archival research. With this purpose in mind, Kurtyka helped publish 300 scientific papers and more than 260 pieces of popular history, mostly in the press, organizing thirteen exhibitions, four of which included extensive catalogues. Highly relevant to his Krakow mandate were various training centers for teachers, in which specialists sensitized them to the institute's historical research and provided them with teaching aids. During his term of office as Commissioner for the Prosecution of Crimes Against the Polish Nation in Krakow, Kurtyka conducts 483 cases, of which only five completed the drafting of the indictment, and three resulted in conviction (Musiał 2012). While indicative of his versatility, his low indictment record was above all a testament to the difficulties faced by memory institutes in the area of criminology, strengthening a growing consensus in favor of research and public education as viable areas for expanding activity.

However, it would be hasty to speak of the emergence of a new field at this point, as memory institutes remain firmly anchored to domestic politics and highly dependent on political patronage. Schmidt, Tismaneanu and Kurtyka sooner contributed to enlarge an interstitial space between politics and historiography, using memory institutes to govern them. From within this liminal boundary, they articulated a network between an anti-totalitarian framework, therapeutic historians, mnemonic warriors and communist-era archives, signaling the shift from the political to the scientific stage. This ensemble solved an important political dilemma for mnemonic warriors: Direct and constant political involvement with the past had produced popular fatigue and proven politically costly in the 1990s, precipitating the normalization of socialist parties. Vertical interest alignment provided a way out of this conundrum: Struggles over the meaning of the past remained relevant in the public sphere, but the political right did not take direct responsibility for their persistence. Instead, this central dimension of political competition was partly outsourced to

a vulnerable sector of the historiographic field that gains privileged access to archival sources dealing with repression[75]. While many historians contest this political technology as an attempt to de-legitimize parties associated to the communist past (M. Spurný, pers. comm., December 2012), its complexities are black-boxed for public consumption, ultimately occasioning a right-ward tilt on the political field.

### 4. Second Sequence: Horizontal Interest Alignment

Horizontal interest alignment occurs *across* relatively bounded spatial arrangements *between* actors that inhabit equivalent fields and possess comparable amounts of a relevant capital. In the realm of post-communist memory politics, it responds to a desire to emulate the successful practices produced in the various instances of vertical interest alignment across borders, with homogenizing effects. Memory entrepreneurs remain pivotal in this problem-solving sequence as well, initially by promoting study visits to the principal and shifting sources of inspiration for memory institutes, and subsequently by encouraging a knowledge exchange among actors at equivalent levels of specialization.

The flow of knowledge is initially unidirectional: The German Stasi Records Agency (BStU), established strictly with the scope of assessing the role of East Germany's secret police, becomes the object of interest from memory entrepreneurs who seek responses to the heated topic of handling secret police archives (H. Altendorf, pers. comm., March 2013). Such exchanges provide opportunities to garner advice on the legal and political hindrances for setting up institutes as well as to acquire technical knowledge on the feasibility and effectiveness of their guiding activities

[75] This was precisely Kurtyka's task as IPN President: In a most telling episode, he announced a list of 500 agent names – obtained from the Institute's archives –, many of which quickly appeared in Polish media. Just hours before the conservative Law and Justice, the party that had pushed for Kurtyka's directorship, had announced early elections for 2007 (Mink 2013:162)

(K. Persak, pers. comm., January 2013). These early visits contribute to the final shape of Poland's IPN, which took the core purpose of the BStU – to establish an archive, regulate access to it and assess the role of the secret police – and covered it with a coating of anti-communist national renewal (Kopeček 2008:87-88). This innovation establishes the IPN as a blueprint for post-communist memory politics, inadvertently serving as a laboratory of best practices and negative lessons for subsequent applications of the memory institute model[76]. In its original conception IPN would prosecute "crimes against the Polish nation", classify and regulate access to files from the former security apparatus, undertake academic research and engage in public education, to which the government added lustration in 2006, during Kurtyka's tenure. However, as lustration proved difficult to implement – the judiciary deemed key articles of the 2006 law unconstitutional – research and public education have over the years unexpectedly grown in importance (K. Persak, pers. comm., January 2013), in Poland and elsewhere.

A tight milieu of historians researching communist-era secret police, many of them memory entrepreneurs, enabled the diffusion and convergence of memory institutes across the region, particularly as the IPN's appearance multiplied networking opportunities. Most significantly, in 2005 the IPN organized a landmark international conference in Warsaw titled "The Communist Security Apparatus in East Central Europe 1944/45 to 1989" (L. Kieres, pers. comm., January 2013), which gathered some 350 participants from across the continent. Its three principal aims were to set a common research agenda for the study of communist security apparatuses, to facilitate cooperation between institutes responsible for security service files, and to raise public awareness

[76] For example, Žáček notes that the idea of combining the "investigation of the crimes of communism" and lustration with historical research into a single body was abandoned by Czech memory entrepreneurs since it had proven "politically sensitive" in Poland (P. Žáček, pers. comm., December 2012).

of secret police activities during communism. As other conferences that followed it, the talks in Warsaw were not strictly academic, but were accompanied by films, screenings and exhibitions, with several institutes – memory institutes or strictly archival organizations – contributing their own exhibits on communist-era secret police. Personal contacts cultivated through this and previous conferences would often be formalized into bilateral agreements between memory entrepreneurs' respective institutions.[77] Tellingly, the Warsaw conference was followed by the signing of various cooperation agreements between the IPN, now under Kurtyka's leadership, and institutions dealing with communist-era secret files across the region, as well as Israel, Russia, United Kingdom and the United States.

For many specialists on secret service files the memory institute model became an increasingly tangible and attractive "upgrade" to the strictly archival state institutions employing them[78]. However, while IPN historians offered a concrete *modus operandi*, – even via trainings and active cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – its fruition was contingent on a favorable political context at home (K. Persak, pers. comm., January 2013). Meanwhile, the networks created via bilateral agreements where deepened to a multilateral format with the establishment of the European Network of Official Authorities in Charge of the Secret-Police Files in 2008. The network brought together institutions from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia for the sharing of knowledge and experiences on academic research

[77] IPN President Łukasz Kamiński embodies this course of action: a member of this small scholarly community with very close contacts to Czech colleagues, he established institutional contacts with the Czech memory institute once he was elected President in 2011 (K. Persak, pers. comm., January 2013).

[78] Institutions entrusted with studying and maintaining communist-era secret police files exist throughout the region but in some cases memory institutes have taken over these files (Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia). In other countries, these archival institutions (such as the National Council for the Study of Securitate Archives in Romania or the Historical Archives of the Hungarian State Security Service) remain independent, although memory institute historians may regularly access their files.

and secondary school education, setting the template for future modalities of regional cooperation. Such agreements allowed all sides involved to exchange documents, grant mutual archival access and implement joint research projects and publications. In the final instance, by guaranteeing access to an ever-growing pool of archival sources, memory institutes and therapeutic historians could reinforce their claims to provide *the* truthful historical narrative of the past.

Such venues strengthened a regional awareness of facing a common predicament, as Persak notes: "when we meet in turns out we have very similar problems, the reaction to our activities is quite similar, problems with public opinion, reactions to the opening of files ... [these are] common and similar experiences which integrate us" (K. Persak, pers. comm., January 2013). The discursive thread of "Communist threat" helped lace together this assorted ensemble of actors, institutions and material devices located in distinct geographical positions. These locations prescribe different interests: In Central and Eastern Europe "communist threat" conveyed the supposed persistence of former communists in the echelons of political, economic and cultural power, posing a threat to democracy and sovereignty. By way of illustration, memory entrepreneur Lukasz Michalski[79] claims "communists, and I mean communists, are still a very influential group in all of our countries … there are branches of the economy that are stuffed with former secret service officials: the banking system, telecommunications, energy transfer (…) they have influence in the media, newspapers, it is difficult to fight it" (Ł. Michalski, pers. comm., January 2013). In a similar vein, the director of Slovenia's memory institute estimates that "more than 80 percent of the communist elite remains in its post, there was no break in the political, economic and historiographic establishment" (A. Valič Zver, pers. comm., November 2012). But the notion of "communist

[79] Michalski is former Deputy Director of the Public Education Office at IPN

threat" inevitably assumed a different shape in the Baltics, where ruling elites belong to the dominant (non-Russian) ethnicities and are predominantly younger: The notion of a threat inherited from the past is similarly pivotal to articulating a political cleavage, but it conveys the threat posed by a suspect Russian ethnic minority vulnerable to the imperialist lure of a resurgent Russia (M. Tamm, pers. comm., January 2013). Yet in both regions, the threat is also present in the shape of a lingering "homo Sovieticus" that is incompatible with the ideal of democratic citizenship and is furthermore linked to contemporary issues such as corruption (Zhurzhenko 2007:3). In this reading, memory institutes counteract a prevailing indifference to the past that threatens the democratic order, often with a sense of urgency. For instance, Schmidt argues her museum serves to counteract several societal ailments: "the language of communist ideals is alive, its notions are alive, a large number of people think as in the past system (…) society (…) can only be changed slowly and with great patience" (Stumpf 2012). Along similar lines, the executive director of Lithuania's history commission is disturbed by communism-era "mental schemes that still influence us", describing them as "an illness that we should overcome" (R. Račinskas, pers. comm., January 2013).

Who precisely embodies this communist threat is rarely uttered explicitly, but for an incipient transnational alliance this lack of conceptualization was a source of strength, rather than weakness. Vagueness endows the concept with cross-border fluidity, allowing wiggle room for domestic redefinitions of "communist threat": Whereas communist-era Hungarian or Polish technocrats, who mostly remained in Socialist successor parties, could be stigmatized as 'communists' by the right, their Czech technocratic counterparts, who overwhelmingly joined the conservative-liberal right (Eyal *et al.* 1997:85) construed themselves as passive resistance to the regime. The filtering out of such peripheral "subtleties" is hence essential to weaving an alliance between

geographically dispersed actors and resources, although a growing access to European arenas inevitably leads to a strenuous negotiation over a more explicit ideological substance, as I note in what follows.

## 5. Third Sequence: Europeanization

Political elites across the continent greeted the EU accession of eight post-communist countries in 2004 as a historical landmark that signaled the arrival point in a painful historical trajectory: Speaking to a large crowd in a Warsaw square, Poland's socialist President Aleksander Kwaśniewski proclaimed: "Ladies and gentlemen, we are making history ... Poland is returning to its European family" (CNN 2004). Conservative leaders set a similar tone: "We are returning to where we belong, to a community that shares the same values and visions," announced Estonian Prime-Minister Juhan Parts (Reuters 2004). EU leaders, on their part, acknowledged enlargement as the final chapter in the transition from communism to democracy: "Today marks the triumph of your determination and perseverance over the legacy of history" declared Irish Prime-Minister Bertie Ahern, host of the enlargement ceremony. For "those countries that were behind the Iron Curtain... tomorrow ends all of that terrible period" (TBT 2004).

For mnemonic warriors and memory entrepreneurs alike, EU accession was a long-awaited moment, but hardly the last nail on the coffin of communism. Rather, their new status as insiders offered fresh agenda-setting and legitimation opportunities to persist in the implicit struggle against the "communist threat" from within a previously off-limits Eurocratic field. The EU's definitional vulnerability, rooted in an absence of well-established political, professional and bureaucratic institutions, allowed memory entrepreneurs to engage in "radically novel performative interventions" (Mudge and Vauchez 2012:450) with a long history in European integration. To be sure, Western actors had for decades engaged with the Eurocratic field to

construct a regime of remembrance founded on the uniqueness of the Holocaust (Calligaro 2013, Levy 2010; Rupnow 2009; Troebst 2010). Memory entrepreneurs could now leverage European institutions to push for a similar condemnation of communist crimes. The aftermath of the approval of a 2007 EU law against Holocaust denial – with optional enforcement in member states – intimated the tone of subsequent institutional incursions: post-communist countries unsuccessfully demanded the addition of provisions against the denial of "communist crimes", but nevertheless compelled EU justice commissioner Franco Frattini to promise an EU-level public hearing on Stalin-era crimes, introducing the topic of Nazi-Communist equivalence into the EU agenda (Rees 2010:231). The proximity of the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall assisted in the unlocking of political opportunities for an EU-wide reckoning with the communist past, but more importantly, a favorable political constellation yielded the support of the rotating EU presidencies[80] of Slovenia (2008), Czech Republic (2009), Hungary and Poland (2011). Liberal or conservative governments sympathetic to the activities of memory institutes and hungry for content with which to fill their European agendas (R. Grosescu, pers. comm., February 2013) happened to be at the helm of all four presidencies, while their temporal proximity proved decisive to a sustained incursion deep into the symbolic and material resources of the EU. While less effective than colonization in terms of bringing about a remodeling of EU symbolic politics, incursions have advanced the anti-totalitarian cause, as was most notably the case with the EP declaration approving of a joint day of remembrance for the victims of Stalinism and Nazism. The declaration effectively moved Europe closer to Nazi-Communist equivalence (Neumayer 2015:13)

[80] The Rotating Presidency, officially known as the Presidency of the Council of the EU, rotates every six months among the national governments of EU member states, and is responsible for directing the operations of the Council of the EU, the upper house of its legislature. The presidency sets out the Council's agenda and its working relation with other EU institutions for a 6-month period.

and is now the object of almost obligatory reference in transnational initiatives condemning communism.

This Europeanizing sequence of problem-solving is complex and multifaceted, but I argue it is fundamentally a story of field emergence. Rather than involving a functional reformulation at the level of the interests, practices or actors operating in the spaces traditionally occupied by memory institutes, this new field offers a "vertical" autonomy that extends the geographical scale of interactions without fundamentally altering the modality of 'local' practices. In other words, the field's differentiation is not to be sought at a functionally different sphere of practice, but rather at a distinct geographical level within the same practice and interest sphere (Buchholz 2016:41-42). I propose following this last problem-solving sequence by observing the multi-scalar activities of its most vigorous memory entrepreneur: Neela Winkelmann.[81] Having lived in Czechoslovakia, Germany, India, Malaysia, speaking five European languages and accumulating political, civic and academic experience, her transnational and hybrid habitus proved pivotal for translating a coherent post-communist voice in the Eurocratic field. Winkelmann's work builds on those of her predecessors, namely Kurtyka, whom she cites as part of an inspirational group of "people with a vision who created the building blocks in their own countries" and who set the stage for "the next degree of freedom" on the European level (N. Winkelmann, pers. comm., December 2012). The last sentence reveals Winkelmann's strategy: with memory institutes dependent on domestic

[81] Winkelmann represents a slight deviation of the memory entrepreneur model. The granddaughter of Jaroslav Heyrovsky 1959 recipient of the Nobel prize in chemistry, she pursued her doctoral studies not in the social sciences but in molecular biology, earning her PhD at Cornell University in 1997. Between 1990-2 she is a member of the Academic Senate of Charles University's Faculty of Science. She becomes politically involved in 1984 as an environmental activist, and during the 1990s she continues her environmental activities, mostly in NGOs. In the 2000s, she joins the Green Party, heads its energy section and runs as their candidate for the 2004 EP elections. She turns into an unswerving anti-communist activist between 2005-8, when she is hired as assistant to Czech Senator Martin Mejstřík, a 1989 student leader and one of the drafters of the law establishing the Czech memory institute that Winkelmann would join as project coordinator.

political patronage, only by scaling up to a European level ("the next degree") can autonomy ("freedom") be achieved. And unsurprisingly, memory entrepreneurs would play a pivotal role in a task that involves the recombination of resources from geographically and functionally disparate realms. Together with the Office of the government of the Czech Republic and the Czech memory institute, Winkelmann set up a working group on the Platform with the goal of creating an EU-funded umbrella organization for institutions dealing with the memory of communism. To this end supportive Members of the EP (MEPs)[82] deployed their political capital and the agenda-setting power of EU Presidencies into the organization of various public hearings and conferences in the EP[83]. Such occasions allowed memory institute historians to share their research in exchange for scientific legitimation of MEP policy calls, namely the Platform's creation[84]. A year later the Platform is formed as an EU educational project with funding from the EC and the International Visegrad Fund[85], and currently includes 55 members including memory institutes, private foundations and NGOs[86].

[82] By 2010 35 MEPs overwhelmingly affiliated with the European People's Party and the post-communist Right establish the informal group 'Reconciliation of European Histories' to co-ordinate their anti-communist agenda in the EP.

[83] A list of EU presidencies and some of the events hosted is revealing: Slovenia 2008:Public Hearing on "Crimes Committed by Totalitarian Regimes"; Czech Republic 2009:Public Hearing on "European Conscience and Crimes of Totalitarian Communism: 20 Years After"; Hungary 2011:Public hearing "What do Young Europeans know about Totalitarianisms?"; Poland 2011:Conference "European Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Totalitarian Regimes".

[84] For instance, the EC Report on the public hearing *European Conscience...* notes the event is a step "towards the establishment of a European platform of memory and conscience" (EP 2009)

[85] The Fund is financed by the Visegrad Group, a body promoting political, economic and cultural integration between Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. During the Czech presidency of the Visegrad Group (July 2011-June 2012), the foundation of the Platform was set as a priority (Visegrad, n.d.), and at the time of its foundation all of the above states were governed by right-wing cabinets.

[86] These smaller bodies, at times victim associations, are however incomparably smaller and financially weaker, and take the back seat when it comes to the production of transnational memory practices (R. Račinskas, pers. comm., January 2013).

As with domestic instances of vertical interest alignment, memory entrepreneurs also pose as gatekeepers who safeguard mutually advantageous terms for the parties involved. Besides providing scientific legitimation, memory institutes act as "think-tanks" (N. Winkelmann, pers. comm., December 2012) for sympathetic MEPs who "need topics, and decommunization gives them one" (R. Grosescu, pers. comm., February 2013). Political patronage[87] allows aligned scholars to present their work at prestigious venues, obtain funding for joint projects and establish their own international networks as a counterweight to their relative isolation from mainstream historiography. Historian Timothy Snyder[88] supported the Platform's creation precisely to overcome the provincialism of much historiography produced in memory institutes (B. Iacob, pers. comm., February 2013), which overwhelmingly deals with national cases and the enumeration of communist crimes.

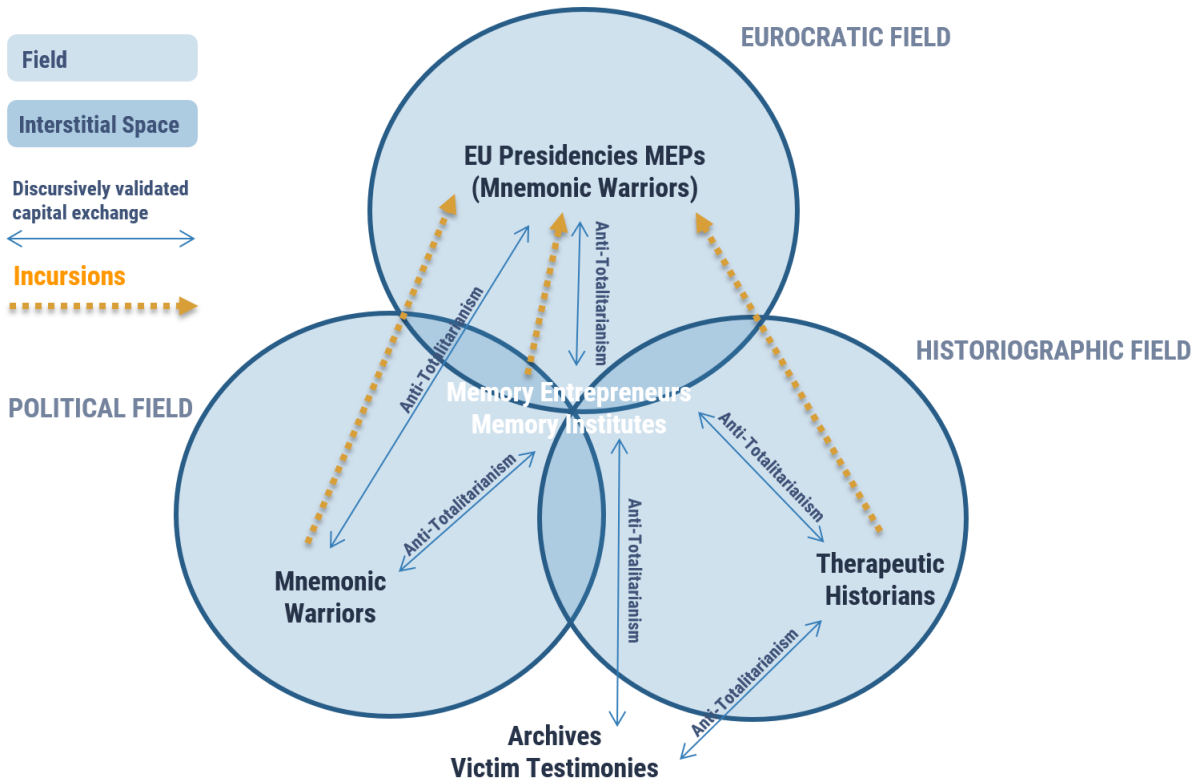
Crucially, by helping members pool and coordinate applicants to obtain external funding for common projects, the Platform exemplifies more than the mere availability of material and logistical resources to be extracted from the Eurocracy. It also sets the stage for producing a new form of *European* capital that can be translated to domestic politics. Given the heterogenous ideological inclinations of memory entrepreneurs, this symbolic European capital needs to be understood as a moving target. For liberal leaning-actors such as Tismaneanu, Europe represents the liberal project of economic, political and cultural integration pursued by the EU. For staunch conservatives such as Schmidt, Europe can be thought of less as an identification with the

[87] This patronage extends to the platform's governing bodies, which include a few mnemonic warriors. Its President is conservative Swedish politician Goran Lindblad, valued for his experience at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) – including as Vice President and chair of the Political Affairs Committee.

[88] Snyder's prize winning *Bloodlands*, which many historian critics accuse of pushing Nazi-Soviet equivalence, endeared him to memory entrepreneurs who see his work as inspirational (T. Burauskaitė, pers. comm., January 2013).

objectives of a supranational organization, and more as a space through which to claim a more encompassing, regional consensus for the anti-totalitarian narrative - at least as long as the EU remains tied to a liberal political project, rather than a community of Christian and sovereign nations. Regardless of how such European symbolic capital resonates domestically, it imposes very concrete commitments on domestic political elites. Legally-binding transnational projects, such as those sanctioned or encouraged by the Platform, limit national governments' temptation to curb them (N. Winkelmann, pers. comm., December 2012), whereas projects' adherence to EU standards circumscribes any cabinet's ability to politicize their output domestically (B. Iacob, pers. comm., February 2013). Even under this new arrangement, politicians have every incentive to continue assisting memory entrepreneurs with material, political, and logistical resources: after all, the legitimacy of their principal product, scientific capital, rests on an ideal of autonomy.

*Figure 6: Post-Communist Memory Regime*



But operating at the EU level, while having obvious advantages, also presented memory entrepreneurs with a number of challenges, namely the rounding of the ideological edges of the alliance. The elaboration of a field-specific discourse begins at the international conference "European Conscience and Communism"[89]. Attended by several mnemonic warriors and memory entrepreneurs from across the region, the conference concluded with the signing of the Prague Declaration (2008). This statement of principles is laden with the language of the anti-totalitarian framework: it demands the recognition of communist and Nazi ideologies as "inseparable", advocating an international day of remembrance for the victims of Nazism and communism, continent-wide parliamentary acknowledgment of "Communist crimes as crimes against humanity", for which they attribute "Pan-European responsibility", and an "adjustment and overhaul of European history textbooks".

The declaration secured the support of some key figures of anti-communist dissidence, most notably late Czechoslovak President Václav Havel, who fatefully signaled the abdication of a liberal alternative to the conservative dissident narrative of the past, buttressing its claim to regional representativeness[90]. In what was a predominantly political act, Lindbad, Mejstřík, Hybášková and Winkelmann prepared the first draft of the declaration (R. Grosescu, pers. comm., February 2013) with input from other mnemonic warriors and memory entrepreneurs before and during the conference (T. Burauskaitė, pers. comm., January 2013). Among the memory

[89] The conference is held in the Czech Senate and organized by mnemonic warriors Jana Hybášková, a conservative MEP who served between 2004-9, and Martin Mejstřík (see note 22) in co-operation with, among others, the European People's Party's Robert Schuman Foundation.

[90] The star speaker at the conference, Havel's address makes his shift apparent: "I believe that establishing institutes of national remembrance in various European countries is a good and important process … Europe is … responsible for giving birth to Marxism and Nazism … The communist regime was – if we consider the millions of dead – probably worse than the Nazi regime" (Mejstřík and Winkelmann 2009:17)

entrepreneurs involved in the negotiations over the declaration's content was Tismaneanu (A. Muraru, pers. comm., February 2013), who would later describe it as "the fulfillment of the second stage of post-communist development in the region" (Tismaneanu 2010:133). Yet its immediate impact was somewhat limited: Some notable political figures and several representatives of memory institutes supported the document, but Tismaneanu criticized the unwillingness of many other memory entrepreneurs to sign it (Tismaneanu 2009). Schmidt was a notable absence, claiming "the Prague declaration did not emphasize enough the crimes of communism" (M. Schmidt, pers. comm., May 2013), but most criticism took the opposite direction. Ronaldas Račinskas, head of Lithuania's state commission, represented the moderate position that, while recognizing the Declaration as a breakthrough, sees the passages pushing for Communist-Nazi equalization as prone to misinterpretation and as unnecessarily blocking the network's enlistment of new partners: "We are losing very strong and very important support from Jewish and Holocaust research circles" (R. Račinskas, pers. comm., January 2013) that have sidelined memory institutes in the struggles for EU funding (Littoz-Monnet 2012:1195).

Notwithstanding the lingering discomfort of some memory entrepreneurs, the document would become referential. The EP's approval of a joint day of remembrance for the victims of Stalinism and Nazism in 2009 partly fulfilled a demand first contained in the declaration[91] that has since provided symbolic ammunition to mnemonic warriors' national and regional initiatives. The document of the agreement establishing the Platform (2011) also references the Prague Declaration, but crucially corrects it by underscoring the "exceptionality and uniqueness of the Holocaust". The Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as the Platform's German partners,

[91] Mnemonic warriors pushed for the condemnation of communism, but such wording was opposed by socialist MEPs. The replacement of communism with Stalinism was therefore a compromise.

pressured for this allusion to the central tenet of EU remembrance, in what was also a concession to the Declaration's earlier sceptics. The suggestion was initially met by "a huge uproar: people were saying 'why should we mention the Holocaust' or 'if we mention the Holocaust we have to mention the Gulag'", but the pragmatists emerged victorious and the document's final version refers to Holocaust exceptionality. The labeling of the entire communist experience as totalitarian also proved thorny, although Schmidt's position that "communism was the same thing from 1917 to 1990 everywhere" (M. Schmidt, pers. comm., May 2013) prevailed. Sceptics, to be found – at the time[92] – mostly in Germany, Poland and Romania, pragmatically conceded the term "rings a bell with the public" (B. Iacob, pers. comm., February 2013). Following the discussion, Schmidt reportedly lamented "I am so ashamed. I have my Prime-Minister [Viktor Orbán]… tomorrow I am going back home and I have to explain why [I signed this]" (B. Iacob, pers. comm., February 2013). Her shame echoed decades of resentment fueled by an alleged political, economic, and cultural hegemony of Western member states over Central and Eastern Europe, now exerting itself through a forced concession to the EU's Holocaust-centric memory regime. But her dissatisfaction was also indicative of an important shift in post-communist remembrance: the pressures of a new, transnational center of power had compelled Schmidt, identified by her colleagues as one of the "toughest" and most domestically-oriented memory entrepreneurs, to knowingly fail "her" prime-minister. As the most visible face of a Hungarian memory regime built on communist-nazi equivalence, Schmidt's concession to Holocaust uniqueness was evidence that an anti-communist European coalition could exert its autonomy vis-à-vis domestic political directives.

[92] While positions on totalitarianism tend to correspond with the nationality of Platform members (particularly in Germany – against the term – and the Baltics – for the term), this should not be overemphasized. Domestic shifts between liberal and conservative governments generally lead to leadership changes with effects on the degree of commitment to the vocabulary of totalitarianism (although deviations from the oft implicit anti-totalitarian framework are very rare).

In sum, the final upholding of both Holocaust uniqueness and the anti-totalitarian framework did not merely respond to the ideological preferences of a majority of entrepreneurs or of an influential minority thereof, but was instead the inevitable outcome of the mnemonic field's position between the Eurocratic and political fields. Anti-totalitarianism is politically imperative for domestic purposes, as the left's delegitimation relies on the notion of communism's indivisibility and resemblance to Nazism, and the still indispensable support of the Political right for memory institutes invites acquiescence to the discourse. Holocaust uniqueness, on the other hand, resonates with the Eurocracy as the guiding principle of EU remembrance, and its endorsement remains a pre-requisite for obtaining partners and sponsorship outside narrow post-communist circles. The final document of the agreement therefore represented a compromise that did not fully satisfy any faction, nor corresponded to the interests of one particular field or faction. It did, however, advance the field.

The discussions on the platform's creation were hardly the first manifestation a regional politics of memory, but they beckoned a compromise whereby incursions into the Eurocratic field could be legitimated as representing a consensual regional initiative. By extension, they also delineated the membership criteria paramount to maintaining the compromise. Various instances of member exclusion illustrate not just the criteria themselves, but the manner in which the field deals with failure: The first criterion requires an abdication of internecine nationalist grievances that have the potential to derail an overriding interest in projecting an image of regional unanimity. As Kopeček notes, most memory entrepreneurs are believed to harbor nationalistic feelings and any meaningful excavation of the past beyond the simplified discourse provided by the anti-totalitarian framework

would "immediately lead them to compete against each other"[93] (M. Kopeček, pers.comm., December 2012). Hence, the mnemonic field has shown it is ready to exclude those who sacrifice regional compromise on the altar of nationalistic impulses. For many years, this was a compromise Slovakia's Nation's Memory Institute was unwilling to make, and the Institute was not allowed Platform membership, remaining marginal to the field; Secondly, the interests prescribed by memory entrepreneurs' footing in domestic political fields – most significantly, to serve the de-legitimation of post-communist parties and their allies – requires that the network upholds an explicit or implicit vision of communism as totalitarian[94]. Acquiescence to the anti-totalitarian framework, understood as a commitment to the unspoken, but objectively ordained goal of anti-communist national renewal, demonstrates possession of the symbolic capital of anti-communism. By way of illustration, the failure of the Federal Foundation for the Reappraisal of the SED (East German) Dictatorship to enter the mnemonic field underscores the paramountcy of the above criterium. Ulrich Mählert, a historian representing the Federal Foundation in encounters with memory entrepreneurs, exposed his want of anti-communist capital by criticizing the simplified equalization of Nazism and Communism: "We said we want to take part and that we are interested in the aim to establish a European discourse on the history of communism, that we have disagreements on the method but not the goal, but they told us directly that we were not welcome anymore ... In the discussions, they would not react to our criticism" (U. Mählert, pers. comm., March 2013). The final, related criterion requires a commitment to the struggle against the

[93] For instance, Slovak and Hungarian scholars have reportedly clashed in workshops (R. Grosescu, pers. comm., February 2013). Much of present-day Slovakia was for centuries under Hungarian domination, whereas for most of the 20th century southern Slovakia has been home to a substantial ethnic Hungarian community, pitting conservative historians on both sides against each other.

[94] Relatedly, Winkelmann describes the pan-European establishment of the "totalitarianism discourse" – which begins with the Prague Declaration - as one of "our achievements." (N. Winkelmann, pers. comm., December 2012)

"communist threat" and is made explicit in the Platform's code of ethics[95]. The Platform rejected potential members, such as Bulgaria's COMDOS[96], on account of being "led by persons who served the totalitarian regime" (Platform 2012b). Insiders have not escaped suspension on the same grounds: In 2014, shortly after a newly elected left-wing Senate changed the leadership of the Czech Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes, the Platform suspended its membership. Despite being one of its founding members and the most committed to its creation, the Platform leadership believed the Czech institute had been "infiltrated by Communist collaborators" (Platform 2014). Such sanctions, while curtailing access to some resources and signaling failure to maintain ideological and personnel purity, could be afforded under the multi-scalar network encouraged by the Platform. Moreover, these acts of purification, while potentially embarrassing, provide an opportunity to underscore the field's principled operation, one which contrasts with politics' porousness to immoral and opportunistic compromises with "communists."

In sum, by scaling up to the level of the Eurocracy, memory entrepreneurs crafted a shared identity and a common organizational basis that ensures the marshalling of political, scholarly and material resources from across the region. Actors previously located in domestic interstitial spaces are therefore increasingly able to orient themselves towards a new gravitational center that can solve past problems: "we really tried all kinds of methods (…) we met victims of the regime, we had political meetings, we had legislative initiatives that never succeeded, we spoke to students at schools, (…) we realized that the only skating ring that we have that is ours and is open is Europe, (…) all of our partners see it the same way, we have all been hitting obstacles so much on our local

[95] The Code of the Platform stipulates that: "The Member does not knowingly employ ... former functionaries with paid political jobs in totalitarian political structures, in paid or unpaid functions" (Platform 2012c)

[96] COMDOS is the Bulgarian body in charge of administering the documents of the communist-era Bulgarian secret services and of vetting officials for links to these organizations

turf that this is our new playground, we are building it for ourselves" (N. Winkelmann, pers. comm., December 2012)

The statement is revealing. Winkelmann speaks of her an of her partners as bound by a common identity shaped by similar experiences: The inability to push forth a radical decommunization agenda at home, where even the political priorities of their political backers puts limits on their programmatic ambitions, drives the push to establish an autonomous space, where the rules of the game and the overarching goals are largely determined by memory entrepreneurs themselves. Once such a field is established, the overarching hope is that a new show of unity leads the EU to more candidly accommodate their voice, recognizing communism – and not just Stalinism – as a negative founding myth, and by extension 'provincializing' domestic resistance to the anti-totalitarian framework by pointing to a symbolically charged European consensus. Yet unlike the "scholarly avatars" invoked by Mudge and Vauchez (2012) to denote Brussels' ubiquitous scholarly-professional colonies responsible for enacting particular models of Europe (particularly in the European Commission and the European Court of Justice), Winkelmann and her peers are limited to rapid incursions contingent on the scant opportunities offered by the EU. Namely, the EU's Europe for Citizens Program, its only mechanism for financing commemorative projects, has thus far shown reluctance to fund initiatives geared towards a clear-cut condemnation of communism (P. Žáček, pers. comm., December 2012). While the program's guidelines explicitly stress the significance of Nazism and Stalinism to European memory, the EU is showing reluctance to abandon its commitment to the centrality of the Holocaust through an overwhelming preference for Holocaust-related projects (Littoz-Monnet 2012:1195). Furthermore, potential western partners show an "inherent lack of interest" and are generally unwilling to join the Platform (N. Winkelmann, pers. comm., December 2012), limiting its ability to act as a "safety net" for memory

institutes via the promotion of legally-binding joint projects. Incursions do have a modicum of institutional footing, most prominently in bodies such as the Platform and in the "Reconciliations of European Histories" group. Yet even this anchoring is somewhat feeble: The MEPs define themselves as an informal parliamentary grouping, whereas the Platform is officially a transnational NGO registered under Czech law, although it receives EC funding and maintains an office in Brussels.

Nonetheless, this section has shown that said failures did not prevent memory entrepreneurs from constituting a transnational field, an observation that can be justified by reiterating four key expressions of its actualization. 1) A *field-specific discourse* inspired by an anti-totalitarian conceptual framework. This discourse, which reflects the legacy of conservative dissidence, has been developed most prominently in the Prague Declaration, and reaffirmed in the agreement establishing the Platform, permeating the mnemonic practices emanating from the field; 2) *Field-specific institutions* or governace units in bodies such as the Platform or the Reconciliations MEP Group, which provide logistical channels for field struggles and compromises to occur; 3) The field is also visible in the *oppositions and membership criteria* that structure it, which are perfectly collinear with the above mentioned field-specific discourse: Entry into the field is conditional on a commitment to anti-communism that, however, often translates in a stricter requirement to subscribe to the anti-totalitarian framework. While some within the field remain skeptical regarding some the framework's tenets, overt criticism may be punished with exclusion, as became palpable to critics such as Mählert. Barring of anyone who has been a former communist party member, informant or otherwise collaborated with the regime provides a more formal membership criteria, as stipulated by the Code of Platform. But these yardsticks hardly ensure unanimity, and past them the field bifurcates between those oriented to compromises with the EU memory regime

– namely in terms of accommodating Holocaust uniqueness, regardless of the sincerity of this position – and those, more bound to domestic imperatives, who seek an almost unconditional equalization between Nazism and Communism. Perhaps the two most prominent representatives of the two positions are the pro-European Tismaneanu and the Eurosceptic Schmidt; 4) *A field specific capital*. The mnemonic field is located at the crossroads of various capital transactions. It legitimates its existence by importing political capital to claim representativeness in European settings, as well as scientific capital from memory institute historians. It exports European capital back to domestic polities, one that strengthens domestic fruitions of anti-communist symbolic capital. It circulates scientific capital among its scholarly members by providing them access to international venues and networking opportunities. But what is the specific form of capital that dominates the field and what, if anything, makes it unique? Political capital plays a prominent role, and the Platform's President Goran Lindblad is a conservative politician with experience in Sweden and the Council of Europe. The Reconciliation MEPs, among them former Lithuanian Head of State Vytautas Landsbergis, also enter the field with impressive political capital holdings. Yet political capital is consistently accompanied by the symbolic capital of anti-Communism, one that is also claimed by most memory entrepreneurs for deeds that both preceded and succeeded the fall of the Berlin wall. Political capital is therefore useful, but hardly necessary, and possibly useless without a modicum of symbolic capital. Yet also the symbolic capital of anti-communism seems to guarantee little beyond entry into the field and the respect of peers. Instead, involvement in the activities, negotiations and lobbying that goes into sustaining and propping up the mnemonic field seems to require the sort of skills accumulated by Winkelmann, whose anti-communist credentials, on the other hand, are hardly exceptional. What Winkelmann possesses in abundance, as do other memory entrepreneurs who have risen from the interstitial spaces between politics and

academia, is a field-specific *recombinant capital* that is accumulated through a demonstrated track-record in memory entrepreneurship. This form of capital is predicated on the ability to balance the contradictory impulses between political discourse and scholarly production, between European integration and nationalist impulse, between the imperatives of domestic politics and the goals of anti-communist activism, while putting this perennial balancing act at the service of a productive enterprise. Evidence of this productivity is ubiquitous. Memory entrepreneurs have helped generate symbolic devices such as the EP declaration approving of a joint day of remembrance for the victims of Stalinism and Nazism, they have given rise to new institutions of memory nationally and in Europe, and they have popularized an anti-totalitarian discourse as simultaneously mainstream and counter-hegemonic. Their productivity is also visible in the concrete, transnational practices of remembrance they have jointly assembled, as I illustrate in the next section.

## 6. The Mnemonic Field at Work

In this final section, I demonstrate the advantages of scaling up to a transnational mnemonic field by describing two memory practices that mobilized field resources to their fullest geographical extent thanks to Platform co-ordination. The first is a travelling exhibition titled "Totalitarianism in Europe: Fascism – Nazism – Communism", the result of a transnational effort to "improve public awareness and education about the gravest crimes committed by the totalitarian dictatorships ... and to illustrate their historical interrelations". The exhibition, coordinated by Winkelmann, secured funding from the EC and elicited the cooperation of Platform members, who furnished photographs and documents from their respective archives and collections. Between September 2012 and August 2016, the travelling exhibit was shown around museums, memorials, foundations, city halls, parliaments, cultural centers and universities in the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Slovakia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Romania, Hungary, Latvia, Ukraine, and beyond

the post-communist region in Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Ireland, Canada and the United States (Platform 2013).

The exhibition defines Nazi and Communist dictatorships in accordance to the anti-totalitarian framework, pitting a small ruthless elite against a helpless population: totalitarian rule would consist of "a political group that exercises complete control of state and society", perpetrates "heinous crimes", whereas its power structures are "demonstrated … by the number of members of the totalitarian party and of the secret police". The information sheet fails to name any of the local drivers of communist takeover and persistence, a burgeoning area of research in post-communist historiography, although it claims the information presented reflects the "current state of knowledge, based on research in the countries presented." The separate panels emulate the sheets of an album, each dedicated to one dictatorial manifestation in a given country. Hence, whether Hungarian communism or Nazism in Poland, the visitor is confronted with the same layout showing war crimes, the corresponding victims, the faces of their perpetrators and the number of condemnations against "totalitarian crimes". The panels' reference to the number of condemnations per dictatorship brings the visitor's attention to the alleged double standard between the justice given to the victims of Nazism – epitomized by the Nuremberg trials – and those of communism[97]. The rendition intentionally underlines what it claims to be "a clear historical connection between Nazism and Communism" but communism is implicitly deemed grimmer as it "continued to perpetrate international crimes … until the very end of its existence." Linking past to present, the exhibit alludes to a communist threat by noting "the consequences of terror … last

[97] This claim also connects with a policy goal contained in the Prague declaration (2008): "…many crimes committed in the name of Communism should be assessed as crimes against humanity serving as a warning for future generations, in the same way Nazi crimes were assessed by the Nuremberg Tribunal."

long after end of the regime" and "include the depletion of democratic elites, widespread corruption, and malfunctioning democratic institutions" (Platform 2012a).

The second memory practice, the development of educational board games, is indicative of memory entrepreneurs' concerted targeting of younger generations with no immediate experience of communist rule. Released in June 2017 by the Platform, "Across the Iron Curtain" relays the stories of those who risked their lives to escape to the democratic West. The game encourages players to help 30 Eastern European refugees, whose actual biographies it includes, cross to the West by airplane, balloon, boat or train (See Figure 7). The suspense builds up to the moment of border crossing, when players discover whether they were followed by a spy or betrayed and reported by a fellow citizen. Winkelmann, who coordinated the project, praised it as a tool to "educate on recent European history, on human rights and their violations during communism" (Platform 2017a). A team of Czech, Slovak and Polish experts, including the acclaimed Karol Madaj, head of the Department of Historical Education at IPN, was responsible for the game's creation. Madaj had previously authored various board games for his institute, including one that has been translated to eight languages, "Kolejka" (Queue). Inspired in Monopoly, the game teaches young people about the scarcity of food and clothing and the resulting long lines to purchase them in communist Poland. For added frustration, Kolejka allows players who have a "colleague in the government" card to cut in line – the equivalent of Monopoly's get out of jail card (Petzinger 2011). For his contribution to "building historical and patriotic consciousness" Polish President Bronisław Komorowski decorated Madaj with the Golden Cross of Merit in 2013 (Siłka 2013).

*Figure 7: Children plotting their escape across the Iron Curtain © Sławomir Kasper (IPN)*

## 7. Conclusion

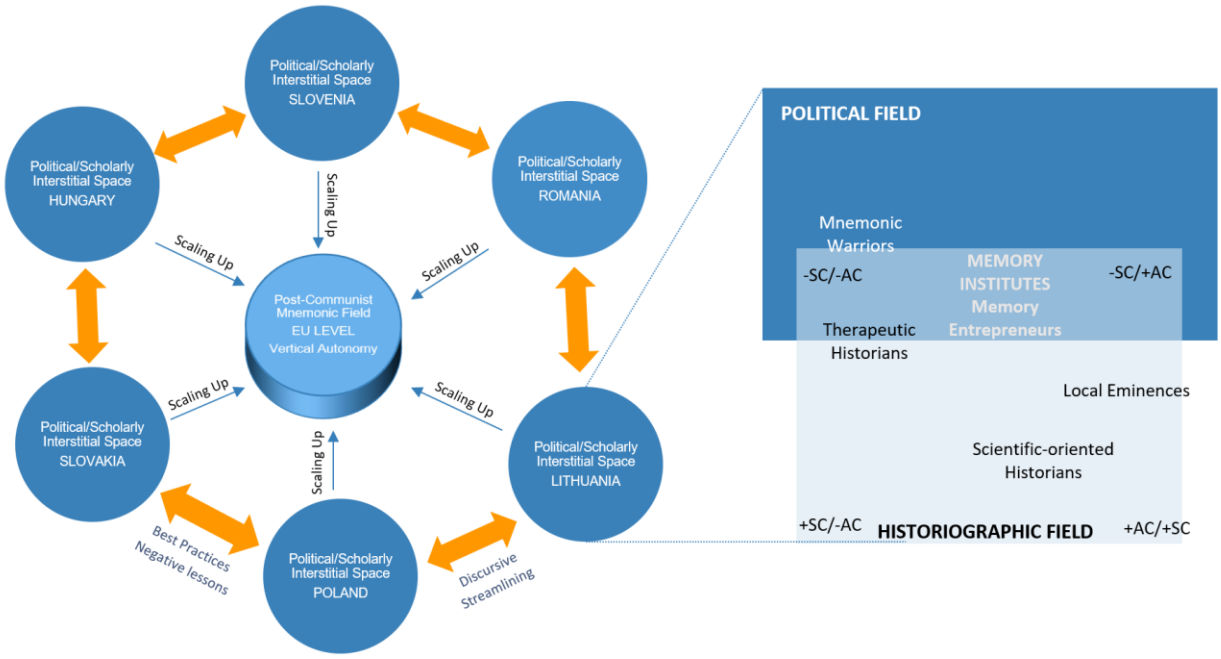
This chapter has defined two temporal cases – a political and a symbolic stage – as distinct social topographies. If in the first stage anti-communist symbolic capital is up for grabs in the political field, by the time the region reaches the symbolic stage this capital is increasingly supervised and compartmentalized in an autonomous mnemonic field. At the same time, we have emphasized their overdetermination by a larger trajectory of problem solving tied to a conservative understanding of what a "return to Europe" entails: the struggle against remnants of the communist past. The left's political survival and electoral success in the 1990s was an immense blow to mnemonic warriors, who countered by entrusting memory entrepreneurs with various iterations of problem solving that culminate in field emergence. This process contains three overlapping

sequences whereby domestic modalities of intervention, consisting of an ensemble of archives, therapeutic historians and mnemonic warriors, are subsequently scaled up and concatenated into a larger, transnational network that gravitates around European arenas. In the first sequence, memory entrepreneurs negotiate the co-optation of a sector of historiography in a bid to provide scientific legitimation to the "communist threat" discourse. Secondly, they trigger a transnational exchange of knowledge through study visits and bilateral agreements, diffusing memory institutes and their practices throughout the region. Thirdly, by capitalizing on EU membership, memory entrepreneurs attempt to validate the anti-totalitarian framework in the Eurocratic field, and ensure a new array of material and symbolic resources through which to trigger field emergence.

The emergence of a post-communist mnemonic field holds important lessons for our understanding of field emergence and brings our attention to a new modality of inception: Rather than observing a gradual autonomization of a space of intersection, the evolution of post-communism remembrance is indicative of the increasing availability of transnational spaces for accelerating field emergence. The concatenation of previously discreet and dependent spaces allows memory entrepreneurs to scale up to a regional level with centripetal effects on once dispersed actor-networks. The effects of this concatenation are synergic: as actors increasingly orient their activities towards their transnational peers, available resources multiply, allowing domestic injunctions to remember to be more forcefully delivered as regionally and scientifically legitimated. Unlike political-scholarly interstitial spaces highly vulnerable to political contingency, a field thus offers another degree of “freedom”. Actors within it are relatively more shielded from the rhythmic discords (Abbot 2005:254; Steinmetz 2011:55) occasioned by the unpredictable fluctuations of politics – the swings between unfriendly left-wing governments and friendly right-wing cabinets – and the piecemeal paradigm changes in academia. But this newly

conquered autonomy, which undoubtedly offers greater leeway for strategic shifts and adaptations, hardly heralds an abandonment of domestic memory politics. On the contrary, the effectiveness of this new local order in legitimating the political discourses of "communist threat" is predicated on the autonomous production of its principal product: a scientific capital that finds validation in Europe.

*Figure 8: Emergence of the Mnemonic Field*



# CONCLUSION

Memory studies have been notoriously impaired by an excessive encroachment from neighboring disciplines incapable of bearing a systematic theoretical and conceptual framework for its study. A lack of clarity concerning the object of inquiry compounds the predicament of memory scholars: collective memory remains a term variously disputed, distrusted or taken for granted. These disagreements have often rehashed a deeper ontological question between structure and agency that traverses the social sciences. Primordialist accounts of collective memory emphasize the weight of historical path-dependencies on the dynamics of collective memory, leading to a disinterest or minimization of actors' ability to articulate and recombine frames of remembrance. Instrumentalist accounts can suffer from the opposite problem: a willingness to embrace voluntaristic accounts coupled to a suspicion of structural-historical constrains on agency. When scholars of collective memory – as they generally do – attempt to find a middle ground, they frequently fail to offer a systematic framework that mediates between structural forces and articulatory power.

Olick's (2006) intuition that collective memory is a process with various moments, rather than an object, essence or variable, has motivated my own search for a viable approach within the discipline of sociology. Depending on our privileging of structure or agency, we may capture these moments in individual memories, in institutionally or materially inscribed shared meanings or in dominant narratives of the past, but taken in isolation neither conveys collective memory's full progression. An encompassing approach must therefore engage seriously with the notion that collective memory represents an ongoing societal negotiation about shared meanings (Halbwachs 1992:37-40), one that cannot be restricted to a discreet realm, object or social moment. This

conceptualization of collective memory invites another definition, that of regime of remembrance: This distinct empirical object expresses an attempt to capture the fluctuations of memory across fields and conveys a stable identity through its official storage and interpretation. This distinction has guided my attempt to unpack the black box of post-communist regimes of remembrance, revealing the ensembles of actors, material devices and narrative frameworks that restrain collective memory's oscillations.

## 1. Memory Institutes: A Symptom of Persistence

By noting that the power of a discourse hinges "less on its intrinsic properties than on the mobilizing power it exercises" (Bourdieu 1991:188), Bourdieu sought to shift our attention from discourses themselves to the practices by which actors are persuaded to embrace narratives and ideologies as expressing their own interests. By the same token, the power to discipline collective memory into a regime of remembrance hinges not on the intrinsic properties – such as truthfulness – of a historical narrative, but on its ability to mobilize a heterogeneous alliance. I have argued that collective memory studies would benefit considerably from a focus on how particular mnemonic interventions elicit the cooperation of actors, discourses and material devices, and on how the interests prescribed by their specific field locations are aligned.

As previous chapters have shown, memory institutes consistently emerge as the pivotal body that formalizes and secures these cross-field alliances, and should therefore be considered the central feature of official post-communist remembrance. They are simultaneously an organizational manifestation of a memory cleavage in post-communist politics, a force of historiographic co-optation and a source of legitimation for a shift in EU identity. Their effectiveness in a single field relies on their continued effectiveness in the other two, as otherwise the network they embody disassembles and the memory they convey is revealed as contingent.

Memory institutes are above all products of the political field, from where they draw most of their material and logistic support. They reflect a continuous framing of political conflict in terms of an anti-totalitarian struggle that rallies alliances by resonating outside the limits of the field. They manifest the centrality of the symbolic capital of anti-communism for political competition, but seek to monopolize and settle the principles of its distribution. They innovate political competition by breaking with the anti-communist politics of the 1990s, perceived as ineffective in removing former communist cadres from the highest echelons of power. In its place, they propose to scientifically re-legitimate the notion of "communist threat" by pointing to historical continuities between communist past and its remnants in the present. Most fundamentally for the political field's functioning, they constitute the organizational manifestation of a recombinant political cleavage capable of absorbing diverse ideological divisions and their respective social bases.

Memory institutes have also intervened in struggles over the interpretation of communism in the historiographic field, whose focal point is the heated political issue of the divisibility of communism: If indivisibility is reaffirmed, research endorses the portrayal of post-communist successor parties as outgrowths of totalitarian terror, whereas divisibility would relativize these accounts by revealing the contingent roots of socialist parties and the appositeness of alternative frameworks of commemoration. As Morgan puts it: "Either communism represented a single, indivisible phenomenon, whose primary function everywhere was as the client or instrument of communism in power, or else it was more complex, diverse and even contradictory in its values and its practices, and thus implicitly equally contradictory in the forms of remembrance which are now appropriate to it" (Morgan 2010:260).

With the stakes of scholarly struggles so high, and compounded by weakly funded and centralized scholarly fields, memory institutes' co-optation of historiographic production to an anti-totalitarian

framework could proceed relatively unabated. Furthermore, political encroachment on history-writing found continuity in the willingness of several historians to partake in the reformulation of national identities during the 1990s. Hence, both in the past and the present, anti-totalitarian narratives have stood on the shoulders of a substantial community of historians who are generally unconcerned with the larger theoretical and conceptual debates transpiring in mainstream, international academia. Instead, they share mnemonic warriors' commitment to educating the public on the "true" nature of communism, a task only obscured by esoteric scholarly discussions.

By now, memory institutes have also found a footing in the Eurocracy. The move reflects an ongoing learning process from liberal-conservative intellectuals concerning the global memory of the Holocaust, as reflected in the words of Romanian essayist Horia Patapievici: "Inasmuch as our fate and our dignity is important to us, we should take an example from the Jews, we should, for example set up an international institute on Communist extermination.... We should also have the power to make the civilized world accept this elementary truth, knowing that the Communist idea implies a necessary devalorization of man and his extermination.... Just as the Jews, by the symbol of the Holocaust, have covered with shame the very idea of racial discrimination, we should ourselves, sons of those who were subjected to Communist extermination, cast the same terrible shame on the ideas that formed the hard seed of Marxist-Leninist ideology." (in Laignel-Lavastine 2004:214)

Some lessons have been successfully applied, albeit always in a cruder fashion. The EU's Holocaust-centered regime of remembrance had succeeded by transcending national frameworks, establishing a common supranational identity, and rallying legitimate sources of knowledge that underscored Europe's rational tradition. If EU member states had relinquished their heroic, mutually exclusive narratives of World War II and united around a shared complicity in Nazi

crimes, memory institutes forged a post-communist alliance that subdued internecine nationalist resentments and placed priority on a common struggle against a resurgent "communist threat". The EC also promoted a decades-long scholarly dialogue between member states geared at overcoming narrow, parochial narratives and embracing a shared European identity. Memory institutes partly heeded this example of engagement with scholarship, but did so largely by co-opting local historiography into substantiating a pre-determined equalization of communism and Nazism.

The compounded effect of the struggles within these three fields are ensured by a modality of mnemonic intervention that sees memory institutes draw resources from each: mnemonic warriors such as Orbán, Kaczyński or Băsescu furnish financial and logistic resources (most prominently privileged access to communist-era archives) from the political field; in the historiographic field therapeutic historians co-operate by selecting and interpreting archival material, deploying their scientific capital for validating anti-communist national renewal; the Eurocratic field, particularly through the formation of the Platform of European Memory and Conscience, brings an additional set of financial assets as well as symbolic resources, namely in the form of EU-level declarations condemning communism.

As one would expect, memory is negotiated across a wider variety of realms that have an unequal say in what and how particular “moments” of memory are finally enshrined in a regime of remembrance. I have merely chosen those that my preliminary research of memory institutes indicated as more consistently involved in the regional production of a hegemonic narrative. The insight to retain here is that without unswerving efforts to articulate a coherent historical narrative in realms such as politics, historiography or the media, eliciting the cooperation of key actors – regimes of remembrance will either fail to arise or be short-lived. Referring back to the example provided in the introduction, it is unlikely that, without cross-field investments, the Hungarian

Socialists would have faced such high levels of street mobilization. Protesters found inspiration in the parallels between 2006 and a wealth of shared meanings inherited from the 1956 revolution and instilled by years of direct and indirect political socialization. This powerful symbolic repertoire, one that can suddenly engulf the public sphere and political discourse, can also crucially seal political fates. The dishonesty, corruption and traffic of influence that the right has insistently constructed as part and parcel of a communist *ethos* creates a veritable minefield for the former communist left, it constructs a version of political reality that merely awaits confirmation in the next electoral betrayal, murky dealing or scandal that awaits around the corner of post-communist politics. For this reason, even as anti-communism seemed a short-term failure, mnemonic warriors maintained their long-standing commitment to anti-communism, one that was always cheap and that appears to have also been effective.

While this symbolic advantage is durable, it is not necessarily permanent. The complex alliances and arrangements on which it is built could be undone in a number of ways. If the political behaviors currently associated to the post-communist left are persistently exhibited by its conservative rivals, as could be argued is the case with the corruption scandals that have battered Hungary's Fidesz in recent years, the construct of a communist *ethos* could very well collapse. However, recent surveys do not seem to support the hypothesis that such behaviors have persisted long enough to erode Orbán's claim to power. Elsewhere, however, there are signs of fatigue with the strategies of memory politics, just as in the mid-1990s. The election of businessman Andrej Babiš as prime-minister of the Czech Republic offers the most compelling symptom. Elected in October 2017, Babiš was repeatedly criticized for his past membership in the Communist Party of Slovakia and his managerial post at a communist-era state enterprise. He also stood accused of being a former communist spy and of using shady communist-era connections to advance his

career (de Candole 2014). Nevertheless, he emerged victorious on a promise to end the corruption that affected the entire political spectrum, and did so while positioning himself as a *rightist*, in spite of accusations of "leftism" hurled by liberal-conservative quarters. One could also argue that the relevance of the past is a merely generational phenomenon, one that could fade as post-1989 generations come of political age, in spite of the right's efforts to instill anti-communism as a durable identity. The key question for anti-totalitarianism is thus whether it will succeed as a form of – politically, socially and institutionally - mediated memory. As soon as the struggle over memory can no longer be based on lived experience – a most prominent source of anti-communist symbolic capital – and relies purely on identity-building, the playing field may be levelled. The left will have the opportunity to counter-attack through the issues of Nazi collaboration and complicity with the Holocaust, which remains a thorn on the side of most post-communist conservatives.

Producing Regimes out of Memory

Within each field that memory traverses, proponents of a regime must control its oscillations in a congruent fashion so as to produce a semblance of consensus. To grasp *how* precisely this is done, I have suggested, following Eyal (2013), that we think of fields and the spaces between them as inseparable but distinct phenomena. Hence the differentiation between how, on the one hand, memory is produced in the political or historiographic fields and, on the other, how it is coherently amalgamated from within field intersections.

I have chosen the metaphor of field intersections to underscore that the thick boundaries generated by field encounters do not necessarily appear at the very margins of fields, as is often implied by the notion of boundary. In fact, intersections may 'cut' across relatively central areas of the field,

rather than at their margins. A few cases from the political-scholarly intersections of post-communism are illustrative: Estonia became known as the republic of historians during the "new era of awakening" of the 1990s, when many scholars took the helm of the newly independent country (Tamm 2016); In Romania, the prominent memory entrepreneur Vladimir Tismaneanu can hardly be considered a marginal figure in either Romanian politics, where he exerts his influence as a public intellectual and academic council chairman of a liberal-conservative think-tank, or mainstream academia, where he has published extensively and holds a professor position at Maryland University; Memory institutes, which govern the exchanges occurring at this political-scholarly intersection, cannot be dismissed as marginal to political competition either. On the contrary, they are the organizational manifestation of a prominent political cleavage that ensures the continuing societal diffusion of an anti-communist symbolic repertoire. While many of their scholars can be placed under the strict category of therapeutic historians and thus considered marginal to the academic field, these institutes are also home to a few important scholarly figures. This is for instance the case of Andrzej Paczkowski, member of the scientific board of Poland's IPN and a contributor to the notorious *Black Book of Communism*.

Upholding no exclusive governing logic, these dense perimeters lend themselves to an entrepreneurial articulation that is likely made more effective by a degree of centrality. Put differently, some accumulation of field-specific forms of capital – those that allow actors to approximate the field's gravitational center – is necessary to tap into resources located deep in the field. In the case of Tismaneanu, his own academic pedigree was cardinal in assembling academics for Băsescu's historical commission – entrusted with officially condemning communism, – and again for involving foreign scholars in the activities of Romania's memory institute (Abraham, pers. comm., February 2013). This is not the only mechanism to escape marginality: memory

institutes' superior funding in a context of financial hardship in academia ensures the flow of relatively qualified historians who will more or less willingly endorse the anti-totalitarian narratives of officialdom. The greater the financial prowess of memory institutes vis-à-vis local historiography (as in Poland), the more the political scholarly intersection will approximate the historiographic field's core.

These generative intersections invite a specific type of actor, one that ensures the outcomes of the various field struggles over memory coalesce into a coherent regime of remembrance. Building on Fligstein (2001) and Stark's (2009:15) insights I conceptualized memory entrepreneurs as skilled actors with an aptitude to navigate across fields and resolve the frictions occasioned by their encounter. This aptitude is partly determined by their location as a bridge between networks ramifying into discreet fields, resonating with Callon's notion of agency as inscribed in the morphology of an agent's relationships (1998:9). But my research shows that this aptitude expresses a hybrid habitus that conforms to the structural encounter they inhabit, a habitus that accounts for their ability to navigate into a bridge location. This hybridity is visible in memory entrepreneurs' dual footing in academia and politics, which projects them into the position of grand articulators between a co-opted scholarship and anti-communist political elites. Rather than some innate talent, it is this oscillating social trajectory that allows entrepreneurs to legitimately forge far-reaching networks across fields. Actors such as Kurtyka, Schmidt and Winkelmann, who partake in the formation of networks traversing the domains of politics, academia and the media will benefit from a degree of ambiguity and arbitrariness that is harder to legitimately accomplish by actors operating strictly within the confines of fields. The assembling of a regime of remembrance linking mnemonic warriors, therapeutic historians, archival sources and an anti-

totalitarian narrative framework therefore expresses a distinct modality of agency, one furthered by field intersections and embodied by memory entrepreneurs.

## 2. The Emergence of a Post-Communist Field of Memory

An interstitial modality of agency also helps us make sense of the mechanisms of post-communist field emergence. As shown in depth in Chapter 5, memory entrepreneurs not only exploited liminal spaces, but concatenated them across borders by scaling up to a higher-order mnemonic field. Field emergence occurs across two temporal cases, evolving from a political to a scientific stage. The former unfolds during the 1990s, when the meta-capital of anti-communism guides and legitimates motions in the political field. Patterns of capital distribution remain unstable, producing unintended consequences for holders of mnemonic capital, namely as the implementation of lustration reveals the recalcitrant blurriness of division lines between perpetrators, victims and collaborators. Memory entrepreneurs purport to correct for these failures by taking memory politics onto a second, scientific stage through three sequences of problem-solving:

1) Vertical interest alignment: by which political elites grant co-opted scholars privileged access to archives and superior financing in exchange for scholarly legitimation of anti-totalitarian narratives. This process is formalized in the establishment of memory institutes.
2) Horizontal interest alignment: whereby memory entrepreneurs attempt to replicate the previous process across borders, using prior examples as laboratories for best practices and negative lessons.
3) Europeanization: during which memory entrepreneurs capitalize on EU membership to scale up from interstitial spaces to a multi-scalar field structure. This allows them to amass new symbolic and material resources while establishing a degree of vertical autonomization from domestic political contingency.

Several indicators point to the existence of a relatively autonomous, multi-scalar field: a) The numerous cooperation agreements interconnecting state-sponsored memory institutes, and which often merely formalize decades-long ties cultivated via participation in common conferences and workshops; b) the creation of a distinctive institutional infrastructure, most notably the Platform, a Europe-wide umbrella organization encouraging the exchange of best practices and resources among institutions; c) the establishment of formal (expressed in the Platform's code of ethics) and informal mechanisms to control entry into the field, (excluding nationalists, former communists, or those opposing Nazi-communist equalization); d) the establishment of a field-specific discourse that privileges an explicitly anti-totalitarian framework and is distinct from the more elaborate domestic discourses from which it feeds; e) the existence of autonomous principles of hierarchy, manifested in (1) the valuation of the symbolic capital of anti-communism; (2) the rewarding of an ability to negotiate the transactions between political, scientific, academic and symbolic capital, essential to sustaining the regime of remembrance.

While a field, its autonomy is weak: memory institutes remain over-reliant on resources – most notably funding and archival access – provided by the political field. Yet by concatenating the domestic interstitial spaces between politics and academia, and scaling up to a new, transnational level, the mnemonic field reduces memory entrepreneurs' dependence on any single political field – which cannot be said of memory institutes. Political contingency – the shifts between unfriendly leftist governments and supportive rightist cabinets – can hamper their functioning and commitments, but political elites in the region are unlikely to pull the rug out from under them simultaneously. This allows the field to rearrange hierarchies and resources without much disruption.

The Platform's continuing operation despite the suspension, in 2014, of one of its founding and most committed members, the Czech Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes, evidenced the expendability of any single actor for the field's persistence. Months before the suspension, Czechs had elected a left-wing Senate that brought about a leadership change in the Institute, moderating its message away from anti-totalitarianism. The Platform, unable to obtain the background information it requested from the incoming leadership, believed the latter had been infiltrated by former communists (Platform 2014). Since at the time the Czech memory institute provided the Platform with its main office, managing director Neela Winkelmann was left in the awkward position of sharing the premises with an organization she believed was compromised by communists. The Platform simply moved to a new installation and has continued promoting various projects. Most recently, it developed an educational board game that tells the life-stories of individuals who escaped communist regimes, and launched an international competition for a memorial to the victims of Nazism, Fascism and Communism (Platform 2017b). Moreover, with the funding opportunities provided by the Platform's anchoring in the Eurocratic field, memory entrepreneurs have created a number of dependencies that domestic political elites must respect. International projects legally bind institutes to adhere to EU standards, which limits governments' ability to either suppress or politicize them (B. Iacob, pers. comm., February 2013). This is not an unwelcomed outcome for memory institute supporters on the political right: the legitimating effects of European and scientific capital offset the slight losses implied by a loss of absolute control over the final contours of memory practices. In the final analysis, the emergence of a mnemonic field allows the post-communist right to reap the benefits of memory politics without their previously associated cost – popular fatigue with political struggles over the monopoly of

anti-communist symbolic capital. The dilemma of memory politics' "failure" in the 1990s is thus solved.

## 3. Lessons for Field Emergence

As an empirical object that tends to occur in unremarkable fashion, field emergence generally leaves few empirical traces at its wake (Fligstein and McAdam 2012:165). Observable cases therefore provide valuable insights to a more comprehensive understanding thereof. The field of post-communist memory is no exception: the systemic collapse of state socialism precipitated instability in the social structure, providing a breeding ground for the rearrangement of organized arenas of struggle.

The first lesson of our case is that it supports the conclusion, suggested by previous studies, that frictions between pre-existing fields hold the potential for the emergence of a new one. Steinmetz has made the point that the appearance of fields reflects an "effort to carve out some degree of autonomy from society-wide dominant powers ... for a certain specialized kind of practice" in societies with an "institutionalized concentration of power" (2011:54). Yet, an abundance of complex and specialized forms of regulatory power that narrow down the space for entirely new power arrangements orients scholarly attention to the generative frictions produced by the mutual encroachment of fields. In his appraisal of the origins of the literary field, Bourdieu saw salons as "genuine articulations between fields" (1996:51) where artists and politicians discussed the distribution of material and symbolic rewards from the state. Steinmetz describes colonial states as fields produced by the intersection of a colonial economic field and the metropolitan state with the purpose of producing new governance and ethnographic practices (2008:596, 602). Medvetz (2012) has similarly pointed to the rise of a field of think-tanks tasked with regulating the flow of knowledge and personnel at the crossroads of political, intellectual, economic and media fields.

My own account of post-communist memory situates it as the product of articulations across the realms of academia, politics and the Eurocracy.

An important precondition for field emergence therefore consists in rearranging social space in ways conducive to the reinvestment of resources from preexisting fields onto a novel arena. The above examples may indicate, as mine certainly does, that field emergence occurs when interstitial spaces offer innovative rewards that successfully endow formerly peripheral actors with a newly acquired centrality. Actors are increasingly compensated for privileging their mutual interactions within this liminal space, shifting the patterns of interplay away from pre-existing fields and developing a sense of belonging to a common enterprise (DiMaggio and Powell 1983). This reorientation is palpable in the historians who reorient their activities from a poorly funded academic field to the public education practices of memory institutes. Relieved from the pressure to publish and perish, these scholars become embedded in a community of therapeutic historians that is offered well-paid and secure positions as well as the possibility to integrate with peers throughout the region.

I argue that the case of post-communist field emergence provides theoretically cumulative insights relevant to structurally equivalent cases, eschewing the danger of deploying "theoretical concepts that are rarely useful beyond a particular case" (Besbris and Khan 2017:147). In fact, the specifics of mnemonic field emergence may be instructive of broader power arrangements. In the modality of emergence described in the previous chapter, actors' reorientation towards a new gravitational center hinges on the possibility of linking domestically-anchored and structurally equivalent interstitial spaces by scaling up to an increasingly available global level. Hence, rather than generating vertical autonomy via an amalgamation and rearrangement of resources from previously available domestic fields at equivalent practice spheres, an autonomous field is

generated by reorienting resources from dependent interstitial spaces onto a higher-level order. In post-communism, the appearance of thick intersections between the political and historiographic field provided a common structural foundation on which to form mutually advantageous ties across borders. Structural equivalence was not simply the result of a common push to reformulate national identities across the region, a push that can always be expected to blur the boundaries between history and politics. Instead, it was cultivated over various study visits, workshops and conferences which deliberately sought to organize this intersection on comparable grounds across the region. Eventually, EU membership allowed memory entrepreneurs to scale up to a level that ensures greater autonomy from potentially debilitating struggles within domestic political field.

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## APPENDIX: Memory Institutes and Political Context for their Emergence

**BStU – Germany:** The Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the former German Democratic Republic, formed on October 1990.

*(Der Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik)*

- An unintentional trend-setter in the region founded under unique conditions: the DDR's absorption by the FRG. It also does not claim to provide a broad interpretation of communism beyond the specific role of German secret services.

**LOM – Latvia:** Museum of the Occupation of Latvia

*(Latvijas Okupācijas Muzejs)*

- Established spring 1993 during the last months of the Popular Front of Latvia government, the first post-communist government to be democratically elected and also responsible for leading Latvia towards independence from the USSR. High-level foreign officials are taken to the museum during state visits, and some of its historians have taken prominent roles in the Commission of the Historians of Latvia (created by the Latvian state in 1998)

**LGGRTC – Lithuania:** Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania

*(Lietuvos Gyventojų Genocido ir Rezistencijos Tyrimo Centras)*

- Established in 1992 by the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania on the same day Lithuania's first legislative elections were taking place. The Council was headed by conservative politician Vytautas Landsbergis, whose pro-independence party Sąjūdis dominated the legislature after the country's first free elections in 1990.

**IPN – Poland:** Institute of National Remembrance

*(Instytut Pamięci Narodowej)*

- Established in December 1998 under a liberal-conservative coalition (liberal-conservative Solidarity Electoral Action and liberal Freedom Union). In March 2007, with the country ruled by the conservative Law and Justice, it is officially entrusted with carrying out lustration Law.

**ICLi – Lithuania:** The International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania

*(Tarptautinė komisija nacių ir sovietinio okupacinių režimų nusikaltimams Lietuvoje įvertinti)*

- The only Baltic State Commission to persist in its original form. Founded in 1998 contemporaneously to Latvia's and Estonia's state commissions.

**TH – Hungary:** The Public Foundation for the Research of Central and East European History and Society / House of Terror Museum

*(A Közép és Kelet-európai Történelem és Társadalom Kutatásáért Közalapítvány / Terror Háza Múzeum)*

- Inaugurated two months before the 2002 general election, in a ceremony with opening speech by conservative prime-minister Viktor Orbán. Orbán lost and after 8 years of Socialist governance he returned to power in 2010 promising to rid the country of all traces of the communist past.

**UPN – Slovakia:** Nation's Memory Institute

*(Ústav Pamäti Národa)*

- Created August 2002, one month before parliamentary elections, when Mikuláš Dzurinda, of the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (liberal-conservative) was Prime Minister. He was re-elected.

**IICCMER – Romania:** The Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile

*(Institutul de Investigare a Crimelor Comunismului şi Memoria Exilului Românesc)*

- Created on December 2005 under the presidency of Traian Băsescu by initiative of the National Liberal Party, a rival faction among the liberal-conservatives that sought to monopolize the symbolic capital of anti-communism. Băsescu's response came with the formation of the Tismaneanu commission, entrusted with producing a report that would officially condemn communism.

**USTR – Czech Republic:** The Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes

*(Ústavu Pro Studium Totalitních Režimů)*

- Established in 2007 by a liberal-conservative coalition dominated by the Civic Democrats, a year after election. Important partner of the Czech EU Presidency under the same government and essential in setting up the Platform of European Memory and Conscience.

**SCNR – Slovenia:** Study Centre for National Reconciliation

*(Študijski Center za Narodno Spravo)*

- Established by the Slovene minister of Justice Lovro Šturm, from the liberal-conservative Slovenian Democratic Party, in May 2008, shortly before parliamentary elections which would oust his government.

**EMI – Estonia:** Estonian Institute of Historical Memory

(*Eesti Mälu Instituut*)

- Established as a Foundation by social-democratic Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves in 2008 to continue the work of the Estonian International Commission for Investigation of Crimes Against Humanity, which closed in 2007.